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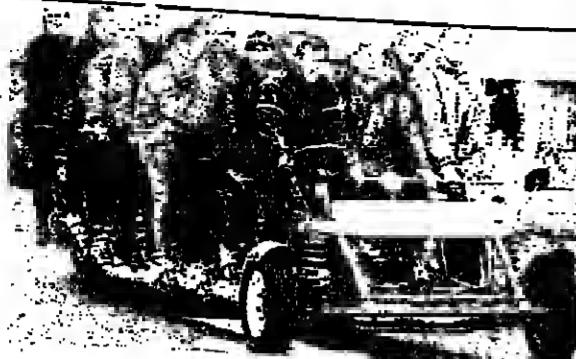
THE INDEPENDENT

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THURSDAY 5 JUNE 1997

WEATHER: Dry start, showers later

(IR 45p) 40p



NEWS PAGE 3

END OF THE ROAD FOR THE CAR?

INSIDE THE TABLOID

EDUCATION+ WHY HEAD TEACHERS CAN'T TAKE IT ANY MORE



IN THE TABLOID

THE SUMMER'S MOST EXPLOSIVE BLOCKBUSTER



Margaret Morrissey: Insisted last night she will not step down

Photograph: Bournemouth News and Pictures

Scandal of the parents' leaders

Lucy Ward
Education Correspondent

Three top officers of England's largest and richest parents' group have been asked to resign by charity watchdogs and may have to pay back tens of thousands of pounds in salaries.

The Charity Commission made its recommendation, leaked to *The Independent*, following an investigation into alleged improprieties at the National Association of Parent Teacher Associations (NCPA), a charity representing parents of children in over 11,000 schools.

The inquiry found the treasurer, press officer and administrator of the NCPA had all been appointed to their paid part-time posts while still trustees of the charity. Under charity law, it is illegal to benefit financially from a trusteeship.

The four-month inquiry involved a forensic audit of NCPA accounts and an examination of the employment records and appointment of the three officers, who said they had resigned as trustees by the time they took up their posts. Press officer Margaret Morrissey, a Dorset publican and former Conservative prospective parliamentary candidate, was appointed as a salaried employee five years ago after first working for the charity while a trustee for a £500 annual honourarium.

Andrew Smeetham, head of the Purbeck School in Wareham, Dorset, was also a trustee at the time of his appointment as treasurer five years ago. Administrator Belinda Yatley, the third employee called on to step down, was appointed in 1993 while still a trustee.

The Charity Commission investigation, launched in February this year, marked the culmination of years of turmoil within the NCPA, which was once dubbed "meanderland" by the former education secretary, John Patten, and last year sacked two trustees who said that they wanted to put the organisation on a more professional footing.

Complaints made to commissioners in-

cluded allegations of improper employment procedures, mismanagement and conflicts of interest. People connected with the association were accused of extra-marital affairs, drunkenness, junketing in expensive hotels and expenses improprieties. Members of local PTA federations, who affiliate to the national body mainly for the insurance cover it offers for events such as fetes, have complained of money being spent on costly meetings when schools are strapped for cash. Schools raise funds for subscriptions through events such as jumble sales.

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The Charity Commission told the NCPA it had "particular concern" over the employment of former trustees and over the charity's management and financial controls. At a four-hour meeting with trustees on 21 March, the commission's representatives advised the NCPA to seek legal advice on whether the three officers had benefited from their trusteeship, whether they should stay in their posts and whether they should be asked to repay money.

The investigators said they were also concerned over the way trustees Sean Rogers and Sandi Marshall had been removed, describing the procedure as "kangaroo court".

The Charity Commission last night declined to comment on the letter and said that details of the inquiry remained confidential.

Mrs Morrissey said she and her two fellow part-time officers admitted they had been trustees at the time of applying and being interviewed for their jobs, but said they were no longer trustees by the time they took up their posts.

She insisted she would not be stepping down, and added: "If I believed it was in the best interests of any parent, child or teacher in this country that I walked away from this organisation I would do, but I do not."

Current NCPA chairman Judith Wood said the charity had "taken action on the letter", which was received last week. It was not certain that the recommendations contained within it would be included in the commission's final published report, she added.

Peter Williams, of solicitors Winckworth & Pemberton, acting for the NCPA, confirmed a letter had been received by the charity. The NCPA had asked the commission for more time to allow it to complete its own investigation and seek legal advice, he said. Though the action recommended in the letter was still a possibility, it was "something which has been overcome, even if it is only in the short term".

The three officers have each been interviewed by the charity's lawyers.

Labour admits to party funds scam

Anthony Bevins
Political Editor

The Labour Party admitted yesterday that new MPs had been asked to make a "contribution" of £5,000 towards the cost of party agents, and that "over-eager" officials had suggested it might paid - illegally - from Commissions expenses.

The initial suggestion that Labour MPs should donate £5,000 a year towards political agents' salaries was made at an official briefing meeting for all 178 new Labour MPs, held at Westminster's Queen Elizabeth Two centre on 13 May.

That was followed up by calls to MPs from their regional party offices, in which it was spelled out that the money should be paid from the tax-free £47,568 office costs allowance - financed by the taxpayer.

None of the potential victims was

willing to be identified by *The Independent* - there is a general fear of the party machine - but an MP who was targeted said yesterday: "It was mad; I couldn't believe it."

Another said: "There was no question of a misunderstanding. They were demanding money with menace." Yet another said: "I was told it wouldn't cost me anything; it could come out of the allowance."

The allowance is paid on the strict understanding that it is used for parliamentary purposes, and use of the allowance for political or personal purposes is forbidden. On that basis, the Inland Revenue does not tax it as income; improper use would be a criminal offence.

But Clive Soley, chairman of the Parliamentary Labour Party, told *The Independent* that an MP had complained to him about the demand and the matter would be investigated.

The existing practice for Labour MPs is that they are asked to volunteer a "precept" of 1 per cent of salary, £438 a year, towards the costs of the national Labour Party, with another 1 per cent levy for their regional parties.

But the idea that the new MPs might contribute more than five times that total levy, financed by the taxpayer, left many Labour MPs flabbergasted and disgusted.

One new MP said: "I was certainly approached by my regional party. This is inappropriate. If people choose to make personal donations to the party, that's up to them. But putting pressure on people, especially those who cannot afford it, who are perhaps maintaining families and kids at university, god knows what else, £5,000 would be an embarrassment."

A senior MP said last night: "The trouble with these people is that they cannot recognise sleaze when it's on their own doorstep."

Woman, 54, becomes oldest test-tube mother

Jeremy Laurance
Health Editor

Another record in fertility treatment was broken yesterday with the disclosure that a woman aged 54 has given birth to twins following *in vitro* fertilisation.

Eleanor Armstrong-Perlmutter cheated nature by giving birth to the twins at University College Hospital, London, yesterday to become Britain's oldest mother of a test-tube baby.

Mrs Armstrong-Perlmutter, who is married to a lecturer at the London School of Economics, exceeds by two years the previous record-holder,

Pauline Lyon, who gave birth to a daughter in April 1995 at the age of 52.

Both women were treated by Professor Ian Craft of the London Gynaecology and Fertility Centre in Harley Street, who has argued strongly that older women should not be barred from fertility treatment. Many of his colleagues disagree and most fertility clinics operate an age bar between 45 and 50 because of the risk that ageing parents may not be able to cope.

A spokesman for University College Hospital said both mother and twins were well.

No upper age limit is set for fertil-

ity treatment by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority, which licences IVF clinics, but doctors are required to take it into account under the authority's code of practice, along with other factors affecting the welfare of the child, in considering the suitability of patients.

A spokesman said there were no plans to impose an upper age limit but the authority would listen to arguments if they were put to it. "We are not aware of any great concern in this area at the moment. No provision of the 1990 act or the code of practice has been triggered in this case."

Latest figures from the authority

show that out of almost 25,000 cycles of treatment with IVF given to women in 1994, 338 were to women over 45, which resulted in 41 births. The main bar to post-menopausal motherhood is the age of the egg. With donated eggs from a twenty-something, older women can carry the developing foetus and give birth to their sixties.

The oldest woman in Britain to undergo fertility treatment is Alison Cobb, who was treated three years ago at a clinic in Nottingham at the age of 59. However, her treatment was stopped after the birth of twins to another 59-year-old in Italy was greeted with outrage.

Mrs Cobb, a grandmother of four, wanted a child for her husband, Stephen, who is 14 years her junior and is childless. She went to Rome for treatment from Professor Severino Antinori, the controversial Italian gynaecologist who has treated several post-menopausal women, but her three attempts at IVF were unsuccessful and she has now pinned her hopes on surrogacy.

The world's oldest test-tube mother is Arech Keh, a 63-year-old Filipino American who lied about her age to get treatment at a clinic in Los Angeles. She gave birth to a daughter last month after telling doctors she was 53.

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news

significant shorts

Blair's hectic schedule set to go supersonic

A cut-price British Airways Concorde flight has been offered for Tony Blair's first official visit to the United States later this month. "Plans to use Concorde are being actively investigated," the Prime Minister's office said. BA have offered Concorde for the same price as a normal 767 jet. "There is no extra cost on this," the spokesman added.

Mr Blair and his entourage would take Concorde to Denver, Colorado, for a two-day G7 summit of the world's leading industrial nations, then to New York for a United Nations summit, before coming home. A BA spokesman said: "We would be only too delighted to assist where we possibly can and save the Prime Minister's party travel time by using our supersonic flagship." Scottish nationalists, however, denounced the move as a "massive waste of taxpayers' money". Alex Salmond, the SNP leader, said: "Power seems to have gone to Blair's head." *Anthony Bevins*

GCHQ to move house

The nerve centre of the Government's communications operation, GCHQ, is to move to a new site, it was announced yesterday. Private-sector firms are being asked to put forward proposals for the massive scheme to relocate GCHQ from its current Fifties-built base at Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, to a new purpose-built complex. Officials say the present base is not equipped to deal with advances in technology, and, with the end of the Cold War, the department could be housed on a smaller site. A GCHQ spokesman said yesterday that it was hoped the new base would be built in the Cheltenham area, where it employs 5,000 people on two separate sites.

Jury selected for footballers' retrial

A jury of eight men and four women was yesterday selected to hear the retrial of three soccer stars who face match-fixing allegations. The jury will be sworn in at Winchester Crown Court where footballers Bruce Grobbelaar, 39, the former Liverpool and Southampton goalkeeper, seen here arriving at court; John Fashanu, 34, the former Aston Villa and Wimbleton striker; and Hans Segers, 35, the ex-Wimbleton keeper, along with the Malaysian businessman, Heng Suan Lim, are accused of conspiracy to give and accept corrupt payments. The four defendants deny the allegations.

Treetop protesters brought to earth

The three-week operation to clear the site of Manchester airport's planned second runway is almost complete following the removal of the remaining environmental protesters holding out in treetop camps. Only eight activists remain, holed up in tunnels in Flywood camp; a lone female protester called Debbie is "locked on" in one tunnel, attached by both arms to tubes concreted into the wall. Police estimated yesterday that it would take another three or four days to remove them from the site in the Bollin Valley, near Styall, Cheshire. The Under Sheriff of Cheshire, Randall Hibbert, said the eviction process was ahead of schedule. *Kathy Marks*

M&S adds fizz to champagne wars

Another cork was popped yesterday in the cut-price champagne wars with the launch of a £9.99-a-bottle promotion by Marks & Spencer.

As a play on the three-digit price tag, the supermarket is billing the offer on Oudinot champagne - down from £12.99 - as the launch of the "Fifth Emergency Service" to quench thirst for the summer. It follows a move by the Co-op to sell Moët & Chandon champagne at £14.99 a bottle instead of at the wine's more usual price of £19.99. M&S said it was hoping the promotion would encourage its British customers to drink as much fizz as their French counterparts. The £9.99 offer will run for six weeks.

Open University falls at last fence

The all-powerful Open University team suffered a shock defeat at the hands of Magdalene College, Oxford, last night in the final of the latest series of University Challenge.

Many viewers expected the OU team to triumph after they annihilated two previous sides, notchng up the highest winning margin in the programme's 27-year history. But they were beaten in the final by 250 points to 195 by a far younger quartet of English, maths and history students. It was a disappointing end for the OU's most experienced panelist, mature student Ida Staples, 72, who helped the team hammer Charing Cross and Westminster School 415-65 (the record) in the semi-final, after out-pointing Swansea 395-85 in the first round.

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Anne Michaels: 'Astonishing first novel' (Photograph: David Laurence)

Canadian's first novel wins top prize for women's fiction

Canadian writer Anne Michaels last night won Britain's richest literary prize, the £20,000 Orange Prize for Fiction with her first novel, *Fugitive Pieces*. She was a surprise winner, beating celebrated novelists such as Margaret Atwood and E Annie Proulx.

The prize, which is only open to women in a bid to promote women's writing, attracted 60 per cent of its entries from North American writers; provoking chairman of the judges, author and critic Lisa Jardine to comment on, "the confidence and maturity of north American writing".

Ms Michaels' book tells the interlocking stories of two men whose lives have been transformed by war. Liz Calder, head of Bloomsbury Publishers, described the book as "the most astonishing first novel I have read in over 20 years of publishing fiction... she has created a work of literature which will undoubtedly live forever in the minds of all who read it".

Ms Michaels, who has also written two collections of poetry, beat a shortlist that included: Margaret Atwood (*Alias Grace*), which narrowly missed out on winning the Booker Prize; Deirdre Madden (*One by One in the Darkness*); Jane Mendelsohn, (*I Was Amelia Earhart*); E Annie Proulx (*Accordion Crimes*) and Marci Scott (*Her's Teeth*).

■ British poet, novelist and playwright, Glyn Maxwell, has won a top American literary prize. Maxwell, 25, has dubbed by one critic the Shakespeare of the Suburbs, has won the EM Forster Award, established from the American rights and royalties of Forster's posthumous novel *Maurice*, and awarded by the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Past winners of the £9,500 award include Margaret Drabble, Seamus Heaney and Julian Barnes.

Maxwell, who has written three volumes of poetry, two plays and a novel, writes work that is often humorous, dealing with the idiosyncrasies of life in middle England. He says he will use his prize money to travel in America. Speaking of his method of writing in a recent interview, he said: "I write verse on a computer if I can find one. I write plays by hand, on four colours of paper, on a desk in a house in the Pyrenees. I write in the day, stone-cold sober, empty of thought, music, the urge. The act of writing alters the passage of time, hurries it, or halts it. That's a glimpse of Heaven. Mine anyway." *David Lister*

Editor accused of inciting anglers to kill

A former editor of the *Angling Times*, the fisherman's bible, has been charged with incitement to kill wild birds following an article supporting the illegal culling of cormorants.

In a rare move, Cambridgeshire police decided to charge Keith Higginbottom with two offences under the Wildlife and Countryside Act. He has been summonsed to appear at Peterborough Magistrates Court on 11 July.

The prosecution follows

publication in the weekly newspaper last December of a front-page photograph showing a masked gunman on a riverbank with four dead cormorants at his feet. The caption read: "This is the picture every angler wants to see - the man, the gun and the cormorants." The birds are detested by anglers because they have voracious appetites and are blamed for depredating fish stocks. The accompanying article described an underground campaign by fishery owners to cull large numbers of cormorants, a protected species. Mr

Higginbottom was quoted as saying that "The Angling Times does not condemn them for it".

Cambridgeshire police said yesterday that Mr Higginbottom,

Blair pledge to mother of race murder victim

Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, is to meet the mother of Stephen Lawrence, the murdered black teenager, to reassure her that the Government will step up efforts to bring his killers to justice.

Tony Blair announced the meeting with Doreen Lawrence yesterday in response to reminders that five men accused by the *Daily Mail* of killing Stephen have done nothing to clear their names.

Stephen, an A-level student, was stabbed to death in a racist attack in Eltham, south-east London, in 1993. Police efforts to track down his killers were stymied by a wall of silence which remained in place throughout an inquest in February when five white men refused to answer questions. After the jury returned a verdict of unlawful killing, the *Mail* published pictures of the men headlined "Murderers" - and daring them to sue.

Yesterday, David Winnick MP asked Mr Blair: "When is justice and the rule of law going to prevail in this case?" The Prime Minister replied that he sympathised with the frustration many people felt, and added: "We will do everything we can, within the rule of law, to rectify that injustice and the meeting with Mrs Lawrence is one part and one step in doing that."

Kathy Marks

briefing

TRANSPORT

Big rise in complaints about privatised rail firms

The number of complaints by passengers about four privatised rail companies rocketed in the first part of this year.

Critics of South West Trains increased by 160 per cent between January and March, during the time when the company scrapped up to 39 trains a day because of driver shortages. There were also big rises in complaints from Connex South Central passengers (up 144 per cent) while Great Western complaints rose 100 per cent and West Anglia Great Northern by 80 per cent.

The figures related to complaints received by the London Regional Passengers Committee, compared with the same period in 1996. Cancellations, punctuality and reliability and passenger information were the main causes of concern. "Increases of this magnitude are both worrying and unacceptable and we shall be discussing them with the companies themselves," said the committee's chairman Sir Alan Greenross. But he added that complaints for a number of other companies actually fell in the first part of the year. These were Chiltern, CrossCountry, Great Eastern, LTS Rail, North London Railways, ScotRail and Eurostar.

TOURISM

Guide takes 'honest' look at Britain

Britain has some of the ugliest buildings in the world and is inhabited by unshaven people with strange accents, according to a new guide published yesterday.

Wales is seen as "England's unloved backyard", Coventry is "a dismal city" and Piccadilly Circus (below) is "fume-choked and uninspiring". The British "don't understand that a good shower is one of life's basic essentials", according to *The Lonely Planet Travel Survival Guide to Britain* (£14.99), but it adds that Britain "remains one of the most beautiful islands in the world". Minus points include "some of the grimiest and ugliest industrial and urban developments in the world", "virtually impenetrable" accents, and "woefully inadequate" plumbing.

The guide says it is prepared to list Britain's negative features because there are so many positive ones. A spokeswoman explained: "The guide gives an honest, independent account of what you can expect to find travelling around Britain. Last year, tourism to Britain increased by 17 per cent so we can't be that bad. In fact, everyone feels welcome."



■ The number of North Americans who visited Britain in March was up by 20 per cent on last year's figure, the Office for National Statistics announced yesterday. The influx helped total overseas visitor numbers reach 1.92 million in March 1997 - a 1 per cent increase on 1996. During the first three months of 1997, the total number of overseas visitors has risen by 5 per cent to just over 5 million.

ENVIRONMENT

Water pollution trend reversed

The number of reported water pollution incidents in England and Wales dropped for the first time, in eight years last year, the Government's environment agency reports today. In 1996 there were 32,409 incidents reported, of which 20,158 were confirmed following investigation. That represents a 14 per cent drop on the 1995 figure for substantiated incidents. The agency, which came into being last year, said the fall was partly due to a lack of rain to wash pollutants into rivers, and also to its own campaigning work and tough policy on prosecuting offenders.

Water Pollution Incidents in England and Wales 1996: £26.

TRAVEL

Health risks add to fear of flying

Heart attacks and other medical emergencies are killing more air passengers than plane crashes, figures from the United States Federal Aviation Administration suggest.

There were 14,000 medical emergencies each year on the nine major US airlines which carry 65 per cent of all passengers flown by American carriers. Applied across all airlines in the US, this was equivalent to 15 emergencies a day, compared to two or three during the last study in 1986-1988. Overall, an estimated 350 passengers a year die on US airliners, compared with an average 118 passengers a year who died in air crashes on US soil since 1978.

The findings are reported in *New Scientist magazine*, which says: "While no one knows why the in-flight death rate has soared since 1988, there are a number of theories. Most of the deaths occur on long-haul flights, and the number of passengers taking these has doubled in the past decade. Additionally, more elderly people are now flying. Some doctors speculate that the exertion of carrying heavy baggage before a flight, plus the excitement of holiday travel, may increase the risk of heart failure."

SOCIETY

Holiday misery for battered children

School holidays mean nothing but misery for hundreds of children who become victims of violence in their homes, the NSPCC claimed yesterday. Launching its Children's Day, the charity said attacks double in the summer months when children are at home, rising by 50 per cent last year during June, July and August. There were an average of 246 reported incidents a month compared to 164 a month for the rest of the year. The charity said it believed calls to its hotline increased in the summer "due to a combination of reasons, including increased stress for parents and carers".



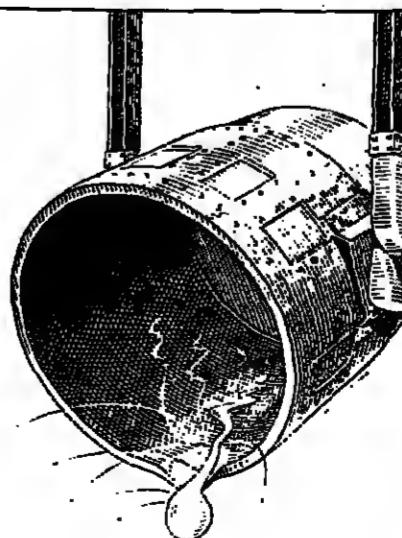
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Kray was
brainless w
laid to res

Two wheels good, four wheels bad

Ministers drive through vision for green commuting as companies support bike loans, buses and car sharing

Randeep Ramesh
Transport Correspondent

It was never meant to be a lengthy relationship, but the public's love affair with the motor car has hit the rocks. The reason for the falling out is the Government's insistence that people learn to use their cars less and public transport more.

Yesterday, Gavin Strang, the minister for transport, launched a number of schemes run by private companies designed to get motorists into work without their cars.

Seven firms, including household names such as Boots, NatWest bank and the Royal Mail are committed to implementing green commuter plans – packages of measures which will reduce the number of car journeys to work – and developing a target for reducing car use.

Among the suggestions are plans for interest-free loans for employees to buy bikes, the introduction of shuttle buses for staff and increased car sharing.

Staff at the Body Shop's headquarters in Littlehampton in Sussex can "hitch" lifts with colleagues by watching an electronic bulletin board which describes the journeys of all employees travelling by car.

Hewlett-Packard, the computer company, has already adopted targets for its staff in Bristol. Under the company's measures, 20 per cent of employees should be cycling into work, 7 per cent will use public transport and 70 per cent should be car-sharing.

Stephen Joseph, the director of Transport 2000, the transport think-tank which persuaded ministers and big business to link up to tackle congestion, said: "We are looking to the new Government not just to support and approve of green commuting but to make it happen."

Mr Joseph pointed out that the experience of other countries is that



Gridlock: A tax on free car parks may be used to cut city congestion

motorist could be told to remove the car from the road and fined.

Motoring organisations welcomed the new initiatives. "Our surveys have shown that 10 per cent of vehicles cause 50 per cent of the pollution and if we can target these cars then the Government will make a real difference," said Edmund King, a spokesman for the RAC.

This week has seen a spate of announcements from the transport team under the Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott, whom many had considered stifled by the dead hand of strict Treasury spending limits.

However, the department has cracked into life. Earlier this week, Dr Strang announced a review of all speed limits, saying that "speed contributes to a third of all road accidents". Last month, Glenda Jackson, a transport minister, said the Government would welcome innovative local authority plans to tackle congestion.

Private firms warned that the Government needed to spend more to improve public transport before any sizeable shift from cars could take place. David Edmonds, a director with NatWest, said: "There has to be a reason for people to be persuaded to use their cars less."

The problem for the department is the lack of cash to support measures to reduce traffic. One cash cow yet to be milked is the company car – which, officials believe, could be used to raise cash. There are more than 900,000 drivers who receive free fuel tax-free as a company perk. This, ministers believe, not only encourages more driving but could provide cash for public transport schemes.

Another rich seam not yet mined is company car parking. Recent studies have shown that nearly half of all parking in urban areas is provided free to drivers of company cars. Four out of five cars coming into London in the hours of peak congestion are company-owned. A flat-rate £500 tax on private, non-residential parking places would raise £1.5bn. If free company parking were also treated as a taxable benefit, another £500m a year could be raised from employees.

But the days of the company car already look numbered. Merrill Lynch, one of the largest City banks, has recently removed cars from its perks package. Its fleet has shrunk from 800 luxury vehicles to just three – two pool cars and a chauffeur-driven limousine.



On your bike: Hewlett-Packard wants a fifth of its staff to cycle to work

Photograph: Rex

is reversed

in Britain

Panel head

- In 1904 during "crush hours" motor omnibuses and cabs averaged 8mph;
- In 1904 during the crush period the average speed for horse drawn omnibuses and cabs was 3.5-6mph; in the "slack hours" the average speed was 7.8mph;
- In 1936 the average speed on the North Circular was 23.6mph; the modern speed is 23.1mph with much higher traffic flows;
- Traffic speeds in central London have been virtually stable over the past 100 years with a peak in 1947;
- Horse drawn vehicles still accounted for 5 per cent of all traffic in 1937;
- Today the average speed in central London is 10mph.

Top mandarin is victim of Prescott's super ministry

Randeep Ramesh
and Christian Wolmar

The top civil servant at the Department of Transport is to leave his job after more than a quarter of a century of public service.

Sir Patrick Brown, the Permanent Secretary on a salary in excess of £100,000, is understood to be going after ministers decided that the new "super-ministry" run by John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister – encompassing transport and environment – only required one top manager.

The new position is likely to be filled by Andrew Turnbull, Permanent Secretary at the Department of the Environment and once tipped to succeed Cabinet Secretary Sir Robin Butler. There had been much speculation that Sir Patrick, 57,

would find life difficult under the new government. Acknowledged as a privatisation wizard, Sir Patrick had a reputation for handling difficult state sales. Despite opposition from inside government and the public, he deregulated the buses, sold off the water industry during his brief stay at the Department of the Environment and then privatised British Rail.

However, with Labour shifting away from the "dogmatic" privatisation policies of the past, many observers considered that his skills would not be best utilised in the new government.

Seen as the ultimate insider, he was in fact one of the few top civil servants who did not go to public school or attend an Oxbridge college. Sir Patrick was also not a career civil servant – spending his earlier life as a successful management

consultant. His new master, Mr Prescott, had in the past made it clear that Sir Patrick would have to fit into his regime. There had been earlier speculation that Sir Patrick would be an early casualty of any Whitehall shake-up but relations between the two men was said to be "cordial and extremely professional".

Some industry observers were surprised with the ease that the permanent secretary had been able to glide effortlessly between Conservative and Labour ministers – but others point out that Sir Patrick had previously worked under the Callaghan administration.

Sir Patrick was no stranger to controversy. In the Eighties he chaired a committee representing members of the First Division Association – the top civil servant's trade union – and produced a discussion paper

which stated: "There is evidence that the traditional even-handedness of very senior officials is being undermined, with some of them arguing privately as well as publicly that there is no conceivable alternative to certain policies."

In 1995, Sir Patrick's department rejected criticism by the Parliamentary Ombudsman

for failing to offer special compensation to householders blighted by numerous options for the high-speed Channel tunnel rail link. Sir Patrick later appeared in front of a parliamentary committee of MPs, who also criticised the department's actions.

Last night, a spokesman for the Department of Transport denied that there would be any immediate change adding that "Sir Patrick and the Deputy Prime Minister get on very well".



Gangland trio: From left, Ronnie, Charlie and Reggie in 1965

Kray was brainless when laid to rest

Steve Boggan

Somebody, somewhere in the Home Office must have taken it literally when they were told to nab the brains of the operation.

It might have been 30 years since Ronnie Kray instilled fear among his gangland rivals on the mean streets of east London but when he died from a heart attack, aged 51, those brains were secretly removed and taken to a laboratory in Oxford.

Rumours of the removal of the Kray twins' grey matter in 1995 have been common currency in the Sunday tabloids for more than a year but they were confirmed by a tearful Charlie Kray yesterday during his defence against charges that he was involved in a £39m cocaine ring. Woolwich Crown Court was

told that two men, Ronald Fields and Robert Gould, have admitted offering to supply £39m of cocaine and providing 2kg of the drug but Mr Kray, 70, denies being involved.

The Crown has claimed that Mr Kray was involved in a conspiracy to flood the streets with cocaine over two years. John Kelsey-Fry, prosecuting, alleged that Mr Kray stood to gain £8m from the plan, but the "criminals" with whom he was dealing were undercover police officers.

However, Mr Kray insists that he never intended to supply any cocaine and was simply "stringing along" his contacts in the hope of perpetrating a sting against them.

During questioning by his defence counsel, Jonathan Goldberg QC, Mr Kray said Home

Office pathologists had removed Ronnie Kray's brain for experimentation and had not told his widow, Kate, even when his body was buried. "After 27 years locked up I thought death had finally freed Ronnie," she said. "But now I'm outraged to learn there's part of him still imprisoned in a jar with a little paper label. It's disgusting ... You'd think someone could have consulted with me or said: 'Listen Kate, OK if we take Ronnie's brain for a bit?'"

Charlie Kray's trial continues. Last year, under the headline

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politics

Brown's plan to boost jobs in EU

Colin Brown and Katherine Butler

The Chancellor, Gordon Brown, said yesterday that Britain would lead Europe by making the reduction of unemployment the priority in proposals for welfare reform and a job-creation plan to reduce Europe's 18-million jobless total.

The Chancellor will raise the three-point action plan at a meeting of European finance ministers on Monday and Tony Blair, the Prime Minister, has already secured the approval of United States President Bill Clinton for putting it on the table of the G8 group of industrialised countries.

The announcement came as the European Commission proposed new social chapter rules which would oblige British companies to set up councils to consult their workers on redundancies and strategic management decisions.

The move puts Brussels on a col-

lision course with the government in light of Mr Blair's stated opposition to social chapter laws which threaten to burden British industry with added costs and red tape. Government reticence on the social chapter looks set to be further exposed within days when two other proposals reach crucial stages on their way to the statute books.

Tomorrow the commission will announce it is to start drafting a directive extending the pay and holiday entitlements of part-time workers. And next Thursday ministers will be asked to sign up to a directive making it easier for employees to sue for discrimination on the grounds of sex.

Yesterday, the commission formally asked both sides of industry to deliver an opinion on the worker-consultation proposals amid mounting concern that Labour in government has little intention of matching its rhetoric on the social chapter with action.

There is already resistance to

calls for a fast-track procedure so that the social chapter can be applied in Britain by the end of this year. "All the messages we are getting from London suggest they are prepared to sign it but don't actually want to apply it," one European Union official said.

Britain's decision to make cutting European unemployment the priority in its own presidency of the union next year will be seen as a further signal, after the French election, that the January 1999 start date for the single currency is likely to be delayed.

The Chancellor, who is pressing for unemployment to be one of the key tests of the progress towards a single currency, denied Conservative criticism that the decision to sign up to the social chapter and introduce the minimum wage would cost jobs and fly in the face of his job-creation campaign. "We support the employment chapter but also support labour market flexibility," he said.



Carried away: Police remove Greenpeace activists from outside the London headquarters of US oil company Conoco. Environmentalists occupied the firm's offices yesterday morning to protest against oil exploration in the Atlantic Ocean. Comment, page 21. Photograph: PA

PRIME MINISTER'S QUESTIONS

THE LEADERS TACKLE BLAIR

John Major Major caught Blair out on the question of Scottish and Welsh devolution referendums. Blair had said that a Bill on devolution would be published before the referendums were staged, but more recently that voters' judgement would be informed by a white paper, not a Bill. Why had he changed his mind? Blair would not admit to doing so, simply saying that all relevant points would be in the white paper.

Verdict: Major wins.

Paddy Ashdown A decision on monetary union will soon be made, and the choice will probably be between relaxation of conditions, or delay. Which would Blair choose? Ashdown pointed out that Maastricht allowed a degree of flexibility in the timetable - would the Government push for this provision to be used? Blair said it was important that the criteria should not be "fiddled or botched".

Verdict: Draw.

THE BACKBENCH ISSUES

THEMES OF THE DAY

- A possible *lentente cordiale* with France's Socialist victory (Dennis MacShane, Lab, Rotherham)
- The West Lothian question (Stephen Day, C, Cheshire)
- E-Golf dealers in Scotland (Dennis Canavan, Lab, Falkirk West)
- The Stephen Lawrence case (David Winnick, Lab, Walsall North)

GOOD DAY... BAD DAY...



David Davis

(C, Hertfordshire and Howden) - said that Blair believed reducing labour costs would reduce unemployment. So why did he think that a minimum wage, raising labour costs, would not increase unemployment? Blair did not say.

THE QUIP OF THE DAY

Blair - Eurosceptic William Cash asked him to go to Argyll and Bute, Scotland. "Mrs Blair and I have a special attachment to our previous Prime Minister", Major rolled his eyes. "I hope he does more good for me than he did for the Rt Hon Gentleman", said Blair of Cash.

THE UNANSWERED QUESTION

Cynog Dafis (P, C, Cardigan) asked a specific question on the Earth Summit. Helen Jackson (Lab, Sheffield Hillsborough) asked a supplementary about 30-plus class sizes in her constituency. Because her question did not relate to the Earth Summit, the Speaker ruled it out of order, and Blair was unable to answer.

THE CREEP OF THE DAY

Rachel Squire (Lab, Dunfermline West) asked Blair to confirm that the Eurofighter aircraft was vital to Britain's defence needs, and its importance should be made clear to the German Chancellor. "Of course" said Blair, "she would know" that the Defence Secretary was making this point to his German counterpart as they spoke.

Compiled by Ben Summers

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Clarke's coup as Dorrell joins the team

Colin Brown
Chief Political Correspondent

Kenneth Clarke's campaign for the Tory leadership last night won momentum for the first ballot when Stephen Dorrell announced that he was standing down to support the former chancellor.

Mr Clarke pulled off the coup without offering Mr Dorrell the key job in a shadow cabinet as the deputy leader of the Conservative Party, leaving himself the option of offering the deputy role to his main rival from the centre, William Hague, in the final stages of the contest.

At their press conference in Westminster yesterday, Mr

Clarke and Mr Dorrell appeared on a platform together under the hurriedly arranged logo, "Uniting to win". But the right wing rejected their "unity" ticket, and warned that Mr Clarke would split the party over Europe.

"It is impossible for Clarke to win except in the nightmare scenario that in the third ballot, it is Hague versus Clarke. The strength of feeling against Hague is so great that some might be persuaded even Clarke is better than Hague. The idea of Hague running the shadow cabinet is risible," a member of one of the opposing camps said.

Iain Duncan-Smith, a supporter of John Redwood, said that after trimming to the right

Clarke and Mr Dorrell appeared on a platform together under the hurriedly arranged logo, "Uniting to win".

Mr Dorrell will be unable to bring a "downy" with him. His supporters, including David Faber, Peter Luff, Simon Burns, and Shaw Woodward, are expected to be split among the other camps.

All the leadership candidates paraded before the National Union of party workers at Conservative Central Office. The National Union will meet again on 9 June and decide on its own choice of leader, on the eve of the first ballot, which is restricted to MPs.

Mr Dorrell dropped out because it became clear he would



Joining forces: Kenneth Clarke and Stephen Dorrell yesterday announcing Mr Dorrell was dropping out of the race

Photograph: Andrew Buurman

deadline to be delayed, made the move easier for Mr Dorrell.

But Mr Clarke last night rejected an appeal to the Eurosceptic right. Delivering the Butler lecture, Mr Clarke said

the Tories would never win an election by consolidating the core support and pursuing the 900,000 who backed the Referendum and UK Independence Parties. "We need to aim at the

sections of the electorate who ought to be Conservative but are most difficult to attract at the moment – particularly young, uncommitted voters under the age of 45," he said.

The Tory leadership also said it was scrapping the existing candidates' list of more than 600 names. The new leader will order a fresh list to be drawn up. New blow to Howard, page 12

Major fury over block on 'gongs'

Colin Brown
Chief Political Correspondent

The Queen's Birthday Honours list was overshadowed last night by a row between John Major and Tony Blair over a list of 'Tory' 'gongs' for the boys.

Mr Major was said to be "very annoyed" Mr Blair had refused to submit to the Queen a list of political honours to Conservative MPs and party workers for services to the party.

Mr Blair's aides said last night Mr Major had left the list for Mr Blair when he vacated Downing Street after the election. "It was John Major's list but it was returned. It is not true to say that he blocked it. It was just a question of vetting it."

There was a second list of official honours, which will form the basis of the Birthday Honours list. Sources close to Mr Blair said it would be "John Ma-

jor's list". But in line with his refusal to propose political honours, Mr Blair refused to submit Mr Major's political honours.

"He still has the Resignation Honours List. He can put who he likes in that," a source said.

Mr Major is expected to reward Tory loyalists in the Resignation List, which will be published in July. Ms Major's spokeswoman said: "They say he didn't make any political nominations. He did. If any blocking was done, it was by them." Ten former Cabinet ministers were given life peerages in a list announced in April in the election campaign. They included Kenneth Baker, Douglas Hurd and John Biffen.

The names on Mr Major's list of political honours are a secret, but may include knighthoods for such stalwarts as his party chairman, Brian Mawhinney.

Leading article, page 19

DAVID Aaronovitch

Grey Head takes Protector to task

The time was the period shortly after the forces of Right and Prudence had triumphed in the long battle against the Dissolution and Corruption.

With the King dead, the new Lord Protector had shunned appearing at Westminster, preferring in his impatience to meet instead with his Grand Council at Millbank and issue decrees against the training of bears, the hunting of foxes and dancing in public. But now he was to appear in the Chamber of the House of Commons, where all were assembled for Lord Protector's Question Time. Awaiting him sat the few, battered remnants of the Cavalier cause – hugely outnumbered by the victorious army of puritans and democrats. The chronicler, an eminent antiquarian, takes up the tale.

"Thus, to acclaimed from his own side – attired in his spotted tie of office – he entered into the Chamber, taking his place next to Bulstrode Prescot and not far from Mr Secretary Straw and Mr Chancellor Browne. And, though he loved not the bearpit, yet his face bore smiles, and he condescended to bow from the hippe most prettily.

Then called Madam Speaker Boothroyd for questioners, recommending to the Lord Protector that he first address himself to the petition made by Cynog Dafis, the Welsh Digger from Ceredigion, concerning the Earth Summit in New York.

"Yea," said the Protector, "for all things are made new, and we shall support the new forest convention, and young people shall join Youth Task Forces and plant trees and not offend their neighbours with midnight carousals."

Hardly had this vision of the New Jerusalem been conjured, than took place a strange occurrence that affrighted many. For who should appear but the old, dead king, his grey, hoary head tucked under his arm, and moaning thus. "Dissimulation! For had not the Protector told the House that no referendum would happen in Caledonia, save that the populace had seen the Bill before the hand? But now the Grand Council are saying that only the White Paper will be published. So is there not some kind of mistake?"

Those around him remarked that he spoke better with his head off than when it was attached. For now was the Lord Protector discomfited; maybe (he bethought himself) he had indeed fallen into error, though if I were, I were a small matter. "The position has always been clear!"

The grey head smiled, more animated than ever it had been in life, which amazed all that did see it. "The right honourable gentleman is both wriggling and waffling," it said. "So why does he not just allow his error?"

Lusty Cavaliers were now shouting divers insults such as "wriggler!" "more ale!" and "come hither, wench!", resting their spurs on the benches and celebrating in such wise as had not been their lot this many a month. The sound of their riot drowned all other conversation.

The Lord Protector gazed upon this unseemliness with contempt, vowing (said many) to come hither less often, for all the good it did (the Lord was calling him to work upon the Nation's training and skills).

As evidence of the idleness of affairs in this place he must perform gaze upon the dolorous countenance of William Cash, ancient and tedious knight of St Ne, who wished to offer anew the advice that he had previously given to the dead king, concerning the Europe conference in Amsterdamme.

The Lord Protector regarded him with a curious expression. "Let us hope," quoth he, "that it does me more good than it did him."

In the crook of an arm, the grey head smiled ruefully."

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news

IRA 'planned sugar bomb hoax on capital'

Jason Benetto

Crime Correspondent

A self-confessed IRA volunteer told a court yesterday that the terrorist organisation planned an elaborate hoax using fake bombs containing icing sugar to bring chaos to London and the home counties.

Gerard Hanratty gave a step-by-step demonstration at the Old Bailey in London of how he made the devices.

Mr Hanratty, 38, denied that it was ever intended that the dummy bombs should contain explosives. Along with seven other men he denies plotting to attack six electricity sub-stations that link the National Grid to London.

He told the jury yesterday that his IRA unit intended to trick the electricity company into turning off the power. "The electrical impact would be total disruption in London. All the traffic lights would be out. It would result in chaos. All industries would be starved - rail, tube and travel," he said.

He added that he thought the "brilliant" plan would have created a political impact for John Major and the British government.

ment and make a fool of the ring of steel round London which stops the IRA entering the City".

The prosecution alleges Mr Hanratty was part of an IRA active-service unit which plotted to use bombs to destroy the electricity sub-stations.

Mr Hanratty described making 37 boxes containing electrical timing devices after arriving in London. He said that the authorities would have had no option but to deal with the boxes placed in the sub-stations, as they were real.

Mr Hanratty said that the IRA had used a multitude of strategies over the years, including sniper, grenade and mortar attacks, car and lorry bombs and hoaxes. "In Belfast, the IRA have carried out thousands upon thousands of different types of attacks ... It closes down the city."

Mr Hanratty, 38, Martin Murphy, 36, Donald Gannon, 34, Patrick Murray, 35, Robert Morrow, 37, Francis Rafferty, 45, John Crawley, 39, and Clive Brampton, 36, all deny conspiring between January and July last year to cause explosions likely to endanger life or cause serious injury to property.

The case continues.



Flat out: Sandbanks beach, Poole, Dorset, which was awarded a Blue Flag yesterday

Photograph: John Voos

Cameras help to stub out seaside smoking

James Medor

The seaside resort of Bournemouth struck a blow for clean air and clean living yesterday when its town council announced that it has banned smoking on stretches of its sands, and has installed CCTV cameras along its coastline.

The move came as the popular holiday town was awarded a sought-after European Blue Flag award, along with 37 other United Kingdom beaches.

David Jones, the town's sea-front manager, said: "[The no-smoking idea] was quickly adopted. We now have three areas, each about 100 metres wide, where smoking is banned. There is not a by-law to enforce this - it is just a voluntary code."

Most sunseekers backed the initiative. Cyril Bailey, a pensioner, said: "The beaches in Bournemouth and Poole are clean and healthy. I've been to beaches across Europe and none compare to these. No-smoking areas are an important part of that."

But Rick Morrison was angered by the ban. "Soon people will have no freedoms left," he said.

And it's not just the smokers who are seeing changes. Coy bathers who struggle under towels to get their clothes off and swimsuits on may blush a little deeper, as surveillance cameras tape their every move. "CCTV was installed to combat vandalism, crime and bad behaviour," said Mr Jones. "Last year it helped with 40 arrests and has slashed the £100,000 vandalism bills."

Blue Flag officials heralded Bournemouth, in Dorset, and the neighbouring town of Poole, as fine examples of "good beaches with good management". Dorset boasted three of England's twenty-two nominated beaches, with Wales receiving nine awards, Northern Ireland six and Scotland one. More than twice the number of UK beaches gained accreditation than in 1995, and, across Europe, 2,311 Blue Flags were awarded.

Stephen Byers, the school standards minister, has asked employers and teacher unions how the dismissal procedure for teachers can be cut to six months.

US teaches heads how to sack staff

Judith Judd
Education Editor

Government attempts to speed up the dismissal of incompetent teachers may founder on heads' reluctance to confront them, according to US research.

Professor Ted Wragg of Exeter University pointed yesterday to studies which show heads try to persuade teachers to leave, move them to non-classroom duties, or pay for specialist counselling or retraining.

The reluctance to dismiss people is not confined to the teaching profession. Other American studies suggest that managers in industry would rather transfer employees than sack them. Another survey of malpractice in the medical profession found it was almost impossible to persuade doctors to testify against each other. A different group of researchers found this was true of lawyers.

Professor Wragg has just received £139,157 from the Gates-Churchill Foundation to carry out the first major British study of incompetent teachers. He will investigate the grounds by which teachers are judged incompetent and how schools deal with them. The US research suggests dismissing teachers is time-consuming and expensive, costing as much as £100,000 in legal fees.

Professor Wragg said last night: "The American research shows that even if you have legislation dismissing incompetent teachers, it is not a simple business. If the rule is that you are dismissed after two unsatisfactory ratings then heads are reluctant to give the second."

The most common grounds used to dismiss teachers in 141 California schools are supervisor ratings, complaints from pupils, complaints from other teachers and pupils' test scores.

Stephen Byers, the school standards minister, has asked employers and teacher unions how the dismissal procedure for teachers can be cut to six months.

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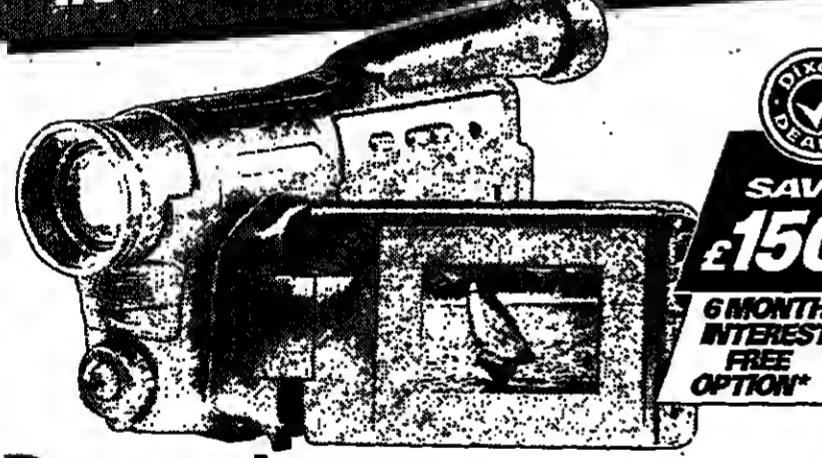
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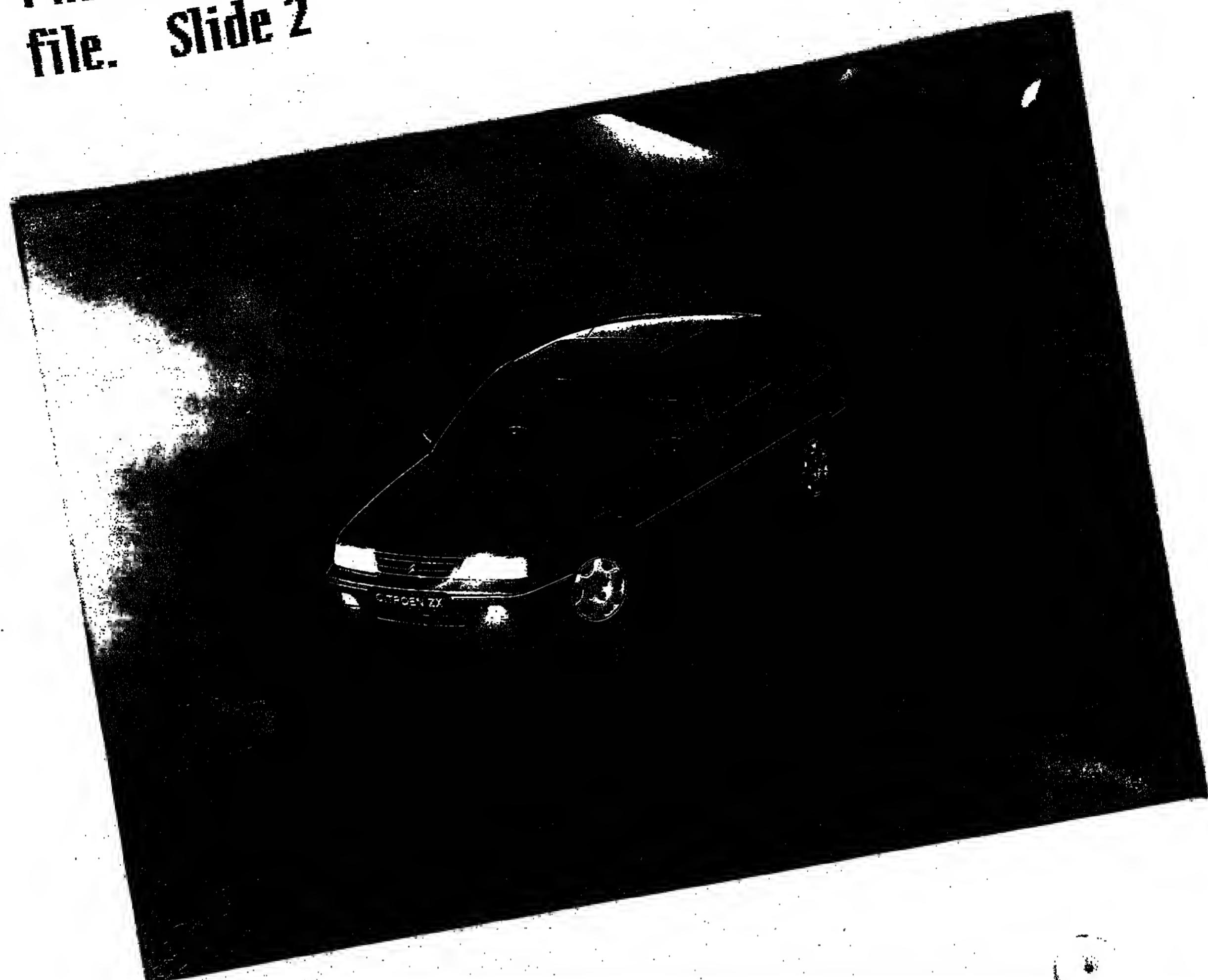
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Phenomenon file. Slide 2

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Consumers can soon sign up for green electricity

Nicholas Schoon
Environment Correspondent

Britain's consumers will be offered the chance to buy green, non-polluting electricity from early next year.

Several electricity supply companies are planning to launch schemes in which customers would sign contracts specifying that all their power came from renewable sources like the wind, water and methane gas generated by rotting garbage. These customers would pay a premium price – perhaps as much as 10 per cent higher than ordinary bills.

The new thinking was unveiled at a major conference on global warming in London yesterday organised by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). The fund is interested in auditing and endorsing such schemes ensuring they actually boost renewable energy over polluting fossil fuel power stations.

Electricity companies are interested in being able to use WWF's famous panda logo to help sell the scheme.

The opportunity arises because from 1 April next year the local monopoly of regional electricity companies will end. Any household will be able to buy power from any generator, anywhere.

Electricity from renewable and conventional sources is mixed on the grid. So the trick, as far as the companies and WWF are concerned, is to devise a "matching" system. This

would assure customers who sign up for green electricity that their consumption, year on year, will be matched by extra consumption of renewable energy in the grid as a whole, over and above that which would have happened in any case.

All UK electricity consumers already pay a small levy on their bills – less than 1 per cent – under a government devised scheme to promote renewable energy. This has worked well, in that the number of wind turbines and other green power sources has grown rapidly.

However, next year this subsidy expires for more than 300 megawatts of renewable energy capacity spread out over dozens of small farms, like wind farms. Some are in danger of closing as a result, which would lead to increases in pollution as fossil fuel power took over from them.

Customers pledged to buy green power could, however, keep them going while persuading generators to invest in new renewable energy sources.

Sue Gill, of Green Electron, a subsidiary of West Country electricity company SWEB, said: "It's a niche market but one worth pursuing." Her company is hoping to launch a nationwide green electricity scheme next year.

Dr Mervyn McKenzie Hedger, climate change policy co-ordinator with WWF, said any scheme would need rigorous auditing to ensure customer demand to buy only

green power had been fully matched with renewable energy generation. Michael Meacher, the environment minister, told the conference Britain would not deliver on its new target of cutting carbon dioxide emissions by 20 per cent by 2010 if other European Union nations did not go further in curtailing greenhouse gas emissions.

The EU has worked out a complex deal on cutting greenhouse gases which allows some of the poorer, less industrialised countries like Portugal to have big increases in their emissions between 2000 and 2010. Europe as a whole is committed to cuts of at least 10 per cent by 2010, making it the leader in the industrialised world.

The Monk's Tale: Pilgrims heading for Lindisfarne Priory on Holy Island, Northumberland, yesterday on the Canterbury-to-Derry 'Pilgrims Way' Journey to mark 1,400 years since the death of St Columba and the arrival of St Augustine in Britain

Photograph: David Rose



PC's son accused in Ulster murder

David McKittrick
Ireland Correspondent

The son of a policeman was among four men who were yesterday charged with the murder of an RUC officer who was kicked to death by loyalists.

The off-duty constable, Gregory Taylor, died outside a bar in Ballymoney, County Antrim, at the weekend. His killing was yesterday condemned in the Commons by Tony Blair who said he abhorred it as random vicious violence.

The four men, all from Ballymoney, who appeared at North Antrim magistrates' court yesterday were charged with murder and affray. They all denied the charges and were remanded

ed in custody until 20 June. Among them was Leslie Thomas Henry, 30, a plasterer, the son of an RUC reservist. The others were Alistair Samuel Stevenson, 30, a process worker; Mark McIntyre, 27, a civil servant; and Samuel James Coulter, 30, a cleaner.

Mr Taylor's death, which followed an argument about the RUC's role in keeping an Orange march out of a nearby Catholic village, increased fears of a repeat of last year's marching season. However, in a move seen as heartening, the Order's Portadown district was written to 1,500 Catholics in Garvagh Road, the focus of last year's violence, saying it hoped to avoid trouble this year.

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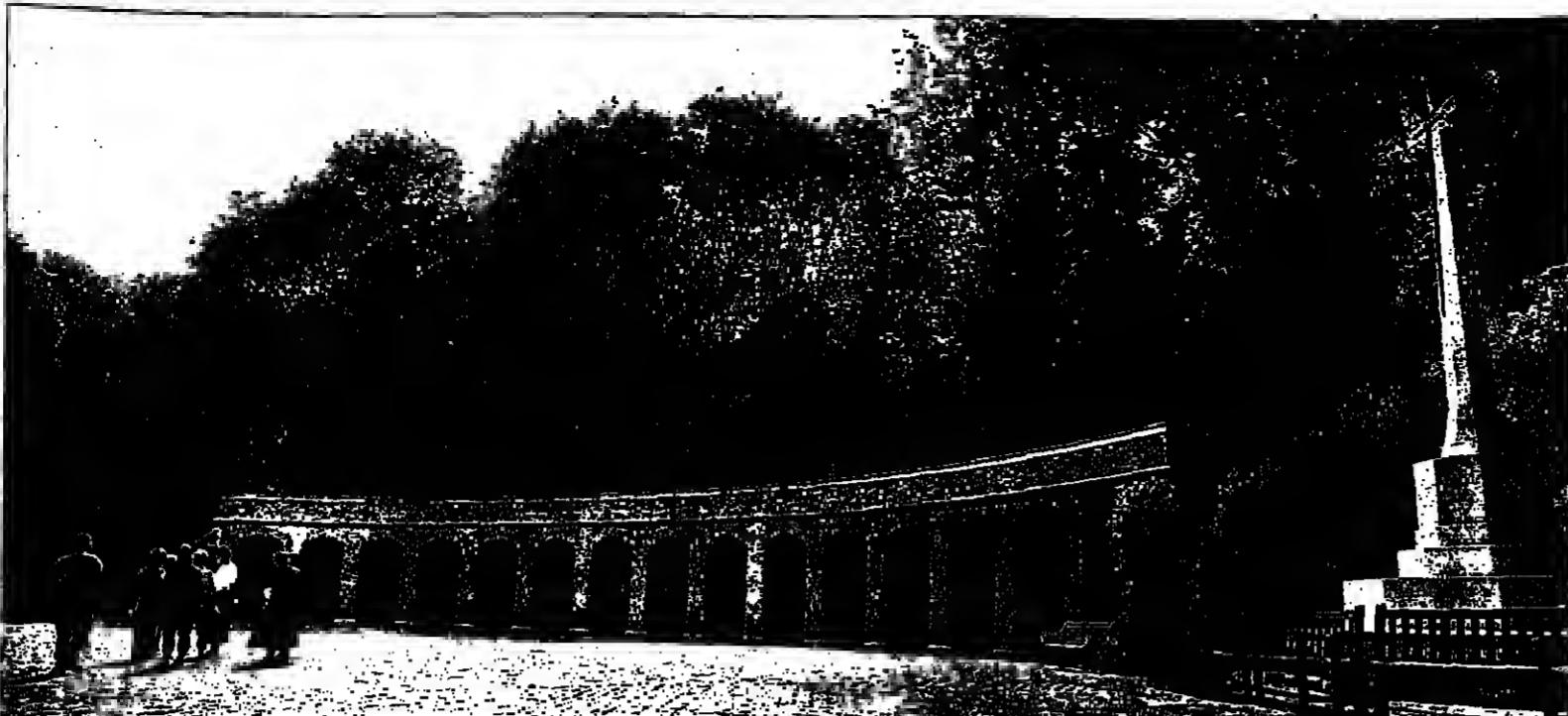
Life after death for historic tombs

Stephen Goodwin
Heritage Correspondent

The dead of north London's most atmospheric cemeteries, Highgate and Kensal Green, should perhaps rise up and toast Sir Jocelyn Stevens and his team at English Heritage.

Over the last 11 years, the Government's heritage quango has given grants totalling £700,000 to help with repairs of monuments and other Victorian features at Highgate Cemetery endeavouring to halt structure deterioration without damaging the gentle decay which pervades the 36 acres of tombs and luxuriant growth.

Last night Sir Jocelyn, chairman



Fitting tribute: Highgate Cemetery features the most important Victorian architecture of any English cemetery

of English Heritage, was the guest of the Friends of Highgate Cemetery at a ceremony to mark the completion of work in the grandiose western section which contains the most important Victorian architecture of any English cemetery.

Karl Marx, its most

celebrated deceased, lies in the eastern section, added in 1855.

Only last month the Disenters' Chapel was reopened at Kensal Green, having been restored from a crumbling ruin. EH contributed £200,000.

The climax of the work at Highgate is the restoration of

the Circle of Lebanon, a grade two* listed feature and its sepulchral approach along the Egyptian Avenue of family vaults.

The circle takes its name from the 300-year-old cedar at the centre of a circle of catacombs which form a giant pot for the tree. This was Valhalla

for wealthy Victorians but after the First World War the cemetery started to fall into disrepair; tombs were desecrated and coffins broken into by dabblers

in black magic.

Within months of the London Cemetery Company closing in 1975, the Friends of Highgate

Cemetery was formed and six years later the rescue began.

Richard Quirk, the general manager, calls the repairs "managed neglect". He said:

"The object has been to stop the clock of deterioration while preserving the character that age bestowed on the cemetery."

Colin Brown
Chief Political Correspondent

A third former Home Office minister yesterday took a sideswipe at Michael Howard, the former Home Secretary, in a fresh blow to his Conservative leadership campaign.

Charles Wardle told the Commons that when he had been the minister responsible for immigration, he had been instructed to turn a blind eye to a damning DTI inspectors' report on the Al Fayed brothers' take-over of the London store Harrods in order to take a more favourable view of their appeal for British citizenship.

Mr Wardle said he was pressed to reverse a decision by the immigration section of the Home Office which rejected the application by the Al Fayseds.

He later concluded the Al Fayseds had been "stitcheted up" by the DTI inspectors' report into their take-over of the House of Fraser, but to ignore the report would have been unlawful, compromised the highest standards of the civil servants in the immigration section of the Home Office and would have led to abuses of immigration rules.

Mr Wardle did not name Mr Howard, but it is likely to have inflicted further damage on his campaign for the Tory leadership following criticism from two subordinates, Peter Lloyd and Ann Widdecombe said there

was "something of the night" about Mr Howard. He was Mr Wardle's boss at the time, and was at the DTI at the height of the Guinness case.

Mr Wardle focused on his long-standing demands for a shake-up in DTI investigations, alleging ministerial pressure to capture "scabs" including Lord Spens, a merchant banker, with the Guinness take-over inquiry in the run-up to the 1987 general election, and the investigation into House of Fraser.

"My objective is to put right what I consider to be wrong. Persistent press inquiries have related to the Conservative leadership contest. I have reflected time and again to journalists that I was seeking the debate months before the leadership contest was contemplated," he said.

"Having looked back at the vitriolic and unscrupulous warfare between Tony Rowland and Mohammed al Fayed, I have come to the fairly dramatic conclusion that the Al Fayseds were stitched up by a DTI inquiry."

In a reference to the "sleaze" row in which Mr Al Fayed alleged he had paid some Conservative MPs in £5 notes stuffed into envelopes, Mr Wardle added: "I can understand the general distaste for their unprincipled and unsavoury use of brown envelopes and other inducements... And yet injustice is injustice."

DAILY POEM

From the Odes: Book One

By Horace
(Translated by Sir Thomas Hawkins - 1625)

*Strive not, Leuconoe, to know what end
The gods above to me or thee will send:
Nor with astrologers consult at all,
That thou mayst better know what can befall:
Whether thou liv'st more winters, or thy last
Be this, which Tyrrhen waves 'gainst rocks do cast.
Be wise! drink free, and in so short a space
Do not protracted hopes of life embrace.
Whilst we are talking, envious Time doth slide:
This day's thine own; the next may be denied.*

Two new paperback editions of the *Odes* of Quintus Horatius Flaccus (65BC-8BC) have just been published. This translation comes from the Wordsworth Classics edition, *Horace: The Odes* (£2.50), which draws on 400 years of English versions, from Ben Jonson to J B Leishman. The Oxford World's Classics volume, *The Complete Odes*, is edited by David West (Oxford, £6.99).

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McVeigh trial: Jury to hear pleas from families for killer to pay ultimate price

Pressure grows to sentence bomber to death

Tim Cormell
Los Angeles

The jurors who found Timothy McVeigh guilty were asked yesterday to take a look at the "hard, cold facts" of the case, and make him pay with his life for the Oklahoma City bombing.

The 29-year-old former soldier, a decorated gunner in the Gulf war, knew "exactly what the effects of this bomb were going to be," prosecutor Patrick Ryan said.

The victims already had "all the sympathy they can stand," Mr Ryan said. They are lined up in the coming days to demand justice. The jury were to hear from a 10-year-old boy who lost his mother and a rescue worker who held a victim's hand, only to feel the pulse slow and stop.

McVeigh was found guilty on Monday of all 11 counts of bombing, conspiracy, and murder. He faces a minimum of life in prison.

But the penalty stage of the trial, with a witness list of more than 100 people in a hearing expected to last several days, will be bitterly fought. From the start, US officials from President Bill Clinton down have promised the ultimate penalty for the bombers.

McVeigh's defence team, meanwhile, faced with a likely guilty verdict, has long set its sights on keeping him alive. His lawyers include several veterans of death cases in Texas, a state which has put 23 people to death this year alone.

The jury of seven men and five women runs from a grand-

mother who remembered praying for the victims of the bomb, to computer workers, a maintenance man who reads the Bible once a week, a Vietnam War veteran, and a woman teacher who said McVeigh "looks like a nice kid".

All were passed during the jury selection as "death qualified", meaning they were prepared to consider the death penalty as the law required it, and had no moral, spiritual or personal objections that ruled it out. Most said it was acceptable in some cases.

Judge Richard Matsch said he would allow photographs of maimed survivors to be introduced along with pictures of victims being wheeled into hospitals, and evidence that some of the victims died slowly as gravel and dust filled their lungs.

"We can't sanitise this scene," he said. He drew the line, however, at wedding photos and a poem by a victim's father. He promised the defence the chance to grill witnesses on whether they had been influenced by earlier trial testimony.

"A penalty phase cannot be turned into some kind of lynching," he said. "This cannot become a matter of such emotional testimony which would inflame or incite the passions of the jury."

The defence has long faced the problem that if McVeigh shows every outward sign of perfect sanity, and though he is said to have been driven by overwhelming hate for the US government, he has the look of a boy-next-door, and has never

shown in public the slightest remorse, or even doubt. There was no hint yesterday on whether McVeigh himself would plead for clemency. Instead friends and family will testify to his loyalty and likeability. They may also probe the reasons for his anger at the government - the botched siege of armed cultists at Waco, Texas, and the bloody stand-off with white supremacists in Ruby Ridge, Idaho, both causes celebres in the militia circles he travelled. The prosecution yes-

terday again cited the *Turner Diaries*, a racist novel of a white supremacist uprising. Mr Ryan quoted passages from the book about a fertiliser bomb that could cause a "shockingly large number of victims."

Legacy of grief: Bomb survivors comforting each other after hearing of the McVeigh guilty verdict

Photograph: AP



Thailand sends drug charge Britons home

Matthew Chance
Bangkok

Sandra Gregory, tearful and drawn after more than four years in a Bangkok prison for heroin trafficking, was escorted under tight security on to a London-bound flight yesterday. She and three other Britons convicted separately of drugs offences in Thailand were handed over to British officials under a prisoner repatriation scheme which may see a string of British offenders transferred from Thai prisons to serve out their sentences at home, diplomats say.

Shielded from photographers gathered to record the transfer, which is receiving wide attention in Thailand, Gregory, 31, was shackled and taken in a police van from the notorious Klong Prem prison on the outskirts of northern Bangkok to an immigration detention centre.

Gregory, from Halifax in Yorkshire, was herself unable to comment on the transfer: "They've told me not to speak to you," she said, as Thai prison guards and British diplomats escorted her past waiting journalists.

"Sandra is very well and looking forward to going home. She will fly back later this evening," said one British embassy official yesterday.

Thai police arrested Gregory, along with fellow Briton Robert Lock, as they were preparing to board a flight to Tokyo in February 1993. Customs officials at Bangkok's Don Muang international airport found 102 grams of heroin inside luggage belonging to Gregory. She claimed to be carrying the drugs for Lock in exchange for medical expenses and her air fare.

Lock denied any involvement and, after three years of investigations and legal proceedings in Thailand, was found innocent. Gregory pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 25 years: the jail term later was reduced under a Thai royal amnesty to 21 years, 10 months and 20 days.

Three other Britons were also transferred to British custody yesterday and are believed to have joined Sandra Gregory on her flight home. Kevin Grant, Peter Heather and Andrew McGarry are each serving between

20 and 40 years for drugs offences committed in Thailand.

Under an agreement signed in 1991, more than 30 British citizens serving prison terms in Thailand, mostly for drug offences, can apply to serve the remainder of their sentences in Britain, provided they have been in Thai custody for more than four years.

Six Britons have already been returned under the scheme which has in the past been dogged by bureaucratic delays. However, the latest transfers have been welcomed by prison welfare groups in Britain who have praised the speedy handling of Sandra Gregory's case by the Thai authorities. Diplomats anticipate more transfers of British prisoners shortly.

"These are transfers, not releases, there will be no reduction in sentences," said Anthony Stokes, a British Embassy official in Bangkok.

"But all those transferred will qualify for normal British parole arrangements. That still means that in Sandra Gregory's case she may have to serve another nine years in Britain before she is free," he added.

Algerians vote to erase past

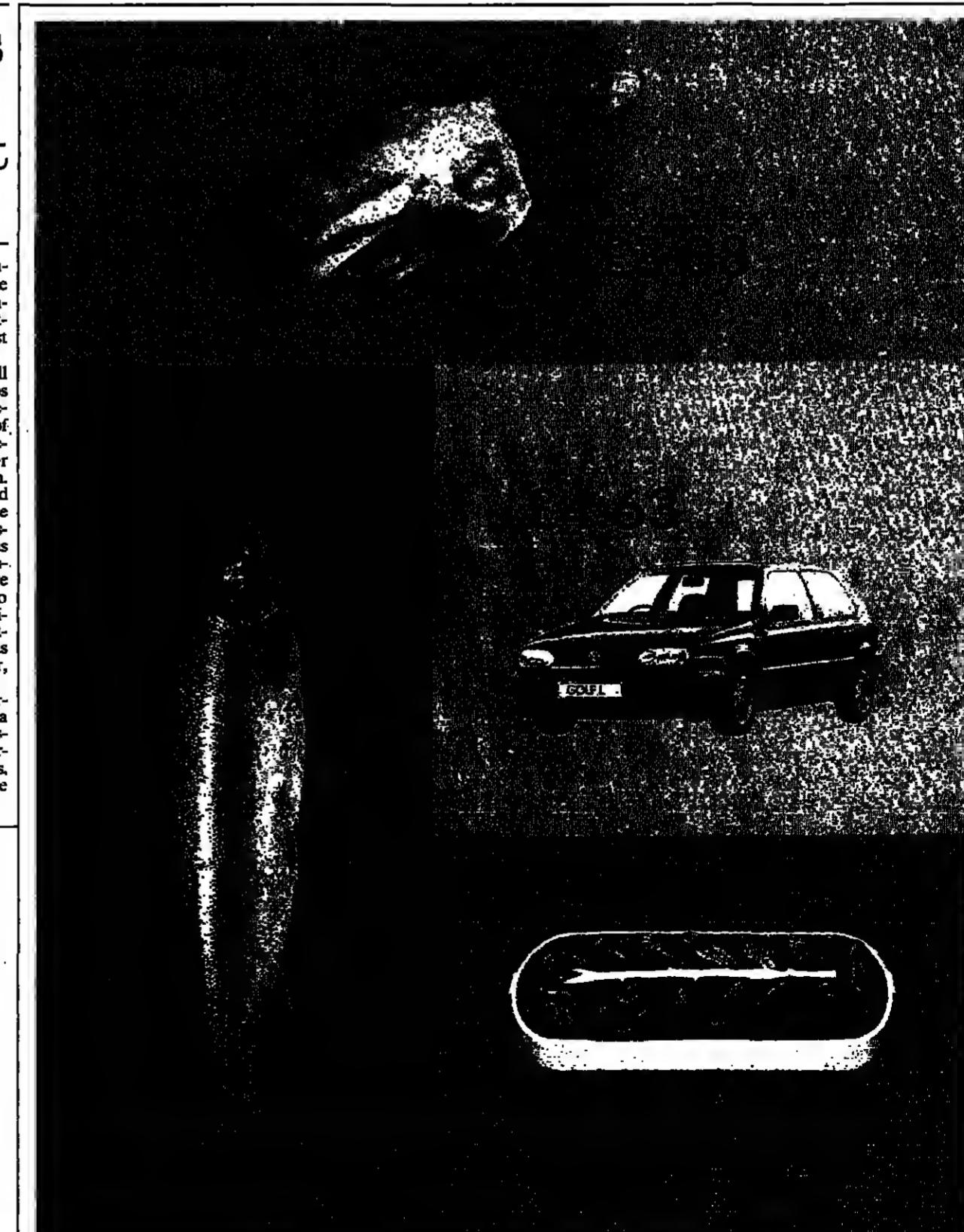
Elaine Ganley
Associated Press

Algiers - In an election that authorities hope will erase the memory of a coup and a cancelled vote, Algerians are casting ballots today for their first multi-party parliament.

The 16 million voters will have to brave the risk of bombs and overcome a sense of hopelessness wrought by five years of a Muslim insurgency, a movement fed by desperation over unemployment and corruption.

Only the soldiers posted throughout Algiers hinted at the stakes in an election that President Liamine Zeroual sees as a step toward ending the insurgency in which 60,000 have died. Mr Zeroual hopes to widen the government's political base by restoring an elected parliament, which was scrapped five years earlier, sparking the insurgency.

The shadow of the 1992 parliamentary vote, cancelled in a coup to thwart victory by Muslim fundamentalists, was ever-present in campaign speeches, and in bombs that shook the capital this week.



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into the possibility of a mad-pig disease, after unearthing a dormouse 1979 study that found pigs at one New York slaughterhouse with symptoms suggesting a disorder of the central nervous system.

The study said that because the pigs came from many different farms, there was a possibility that there was a widespread problem, but the findings were never followed up.

While there have been consistent denials that there have ever been any BSE cases in the US, there are documented instances of what is described as a "spontaneously occurring form of spongiform en-

Oprah Winfrey: Audience told US not immune from BSE

cephalopathy" in mink and farmed deer. Some scientists believe that the risk of a BSE epidemic exists in the US, where there are 100 million head of cattle, because around the same proportion of animal protein was added to livestock feed, before the new ban, as in Britain.

Some specialists say the fact that the ban does not affect pet food or chicken- or pig-feed, however, leaves open the possibility of this cheaper feed being used for cattle - as happened in some European countries.

Others, including a spokeswoman for the US Consumers' Union, objected that the pork exemption made the ban "totally inadequate". She said that British research showed that pigs could be susceptible to BSE.

US consumer groups and veterinarians pressed earlier this year for more research

Hong Kong handover

50,000 defy China to remember Tiananmen



Flame of liberty: Protestors wave candles in Victoria Park at a rally for Tiananmen Square's victims. Photograph: Reuter



Stephen Vines
Hong Kong

As many as 55,000 Hong Kong people have defied both the Chinese government and the territory's incoming post-colonial administration by joining one of the biggest rallies held to commemorate the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre.

With only three weeks to go before the handover to Chinese rule, a sombre crowd last night listened intently as Szeto Wah, one of the democracy movement's leaders, told them that he did not underestimate "the difficulties and dangers that lay ahead of us, and the price we have to pay". He vowed that the movement would continue "even when the seas run dry and the rocks crumble".

Another of the rally's organisers, Kong Ho-sui, said that even if rallies of this kind were banned next year, the people would assemble at the same time and place as individuals and would defy the authorities to stop them.

Standing under a massive banner inscribed with the Chinese characters for "light to the end", Yeung Sum, a legislator and rally organiser, said civil disobedience might be necessary in future if Hong Kong wished to continue supporting China's democracy movement.

Last night's demonstration was far bigger than in recent years. "We are going back to China, so we have to stand up", said Lau San-ching, a former political prisoner in China who joined the demonstration. He believed Hong Kong had a better chance of influencing China once it returned to Chinese sovereignty. "However many people we get to demonstrate, it doesn't matter, because we will be demonstrating in a part of China", he said.

As usual, the democracy movement managed to mobilise an impressive cross-section of the population ranging from babes in arms to the frail and elderly. Factory workers in grubby T-shirts mixed with smartly dressed executives in designer-made casual clothing.

In the sweltering heat of a humid Hong Kong summer night the crowd sang patriotic songs and roared slogans calling for the release of dissidents, freedom, democracy and an end to one-party dictatorship. They waved small candles in the air as they stood in silent tribute to those who died in Tiananmen Square eight years ago.

Some of those attending the rally said they would not dare to come again next year, but others were determined not to be cowed. Opinion polls show a remarkably high degree of support for the democracy movement and an equally large number of people who believe that their protest activities will be doomed under the new government.

The sensitivity surrounding last night's rally is reflected in the row over a statue called the "Pillar of Shame" by the Danish sculptor Jens Galschiot. The statue was displayed at the rally but had to be taken down within an hour of its end. Applications for its temporary display in a public place have been turned down by local

councils and universities. The Chinese authorities and the incoming government have declined to make it clear whether protests of this kind will be legal after 1 July. Nor is it known whether the alliance which organises this annual commemoration will be banned.

Tung Chee-hwa, the Chief Executive designate of the new government, called on Hong Kong people to put down the "June 4 baggage". He said they should look forward to the prospect of reunification with China rather than backwards to an event eight years ago.

Cui Tiankai, China's foreign ministry spokesman, joined Mr Tung in refusing to say whether democracy protests would be banned, but dismissed the protesters as irrelevant. "The thing Hong Kong's 6 million residents are most concerned about is the act of reunification with China", he said.

The new regime will introduce laws to outlaw activities

Newspaper raided
Hong Kong's powerful independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) yesterday launched an unprecedented crackdown on a newspaper company accused of falsifying its circulation figures, writes Stephen Vines.

Six executives from the English language *Hong Kong Standard* newspaper were arrested and the homes and offices of executives were raided by the ICAC, which has wide powers of search and arrest.

In a statement, the ICAC accused the *Hong Kong Standard* and *Sunday Standard* of "fraudulently and systematically inflating circulation figures to deceive a UK based circulation audit company and local advertising clients".

which undermine "national security". The precise nature of these activities has not been defined, aside from a statement by Mr Tung's office saying that the new government will ban organisations and activities which challenge "the safeguarding of the territorial integrity and the independence of the People's Republic of China".

China insisted on introducing laws covering subversion and national security following the mass protests in Hong Kong after the 1989 massacre. The Chinese government felt challenged when as many as a fifth of the population came out on the streets to protest at this time.

The passion and sadness of eight years ago has now faded, but memories of Tiananmen remain surprisingly vivid and fears of something similar happening in Hong Kong are not entirely absent.



Hope flickers: A man lighting a candle in front of a portrait of the Goddess of Democracy. Photograph: Reuter

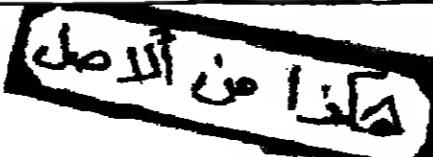
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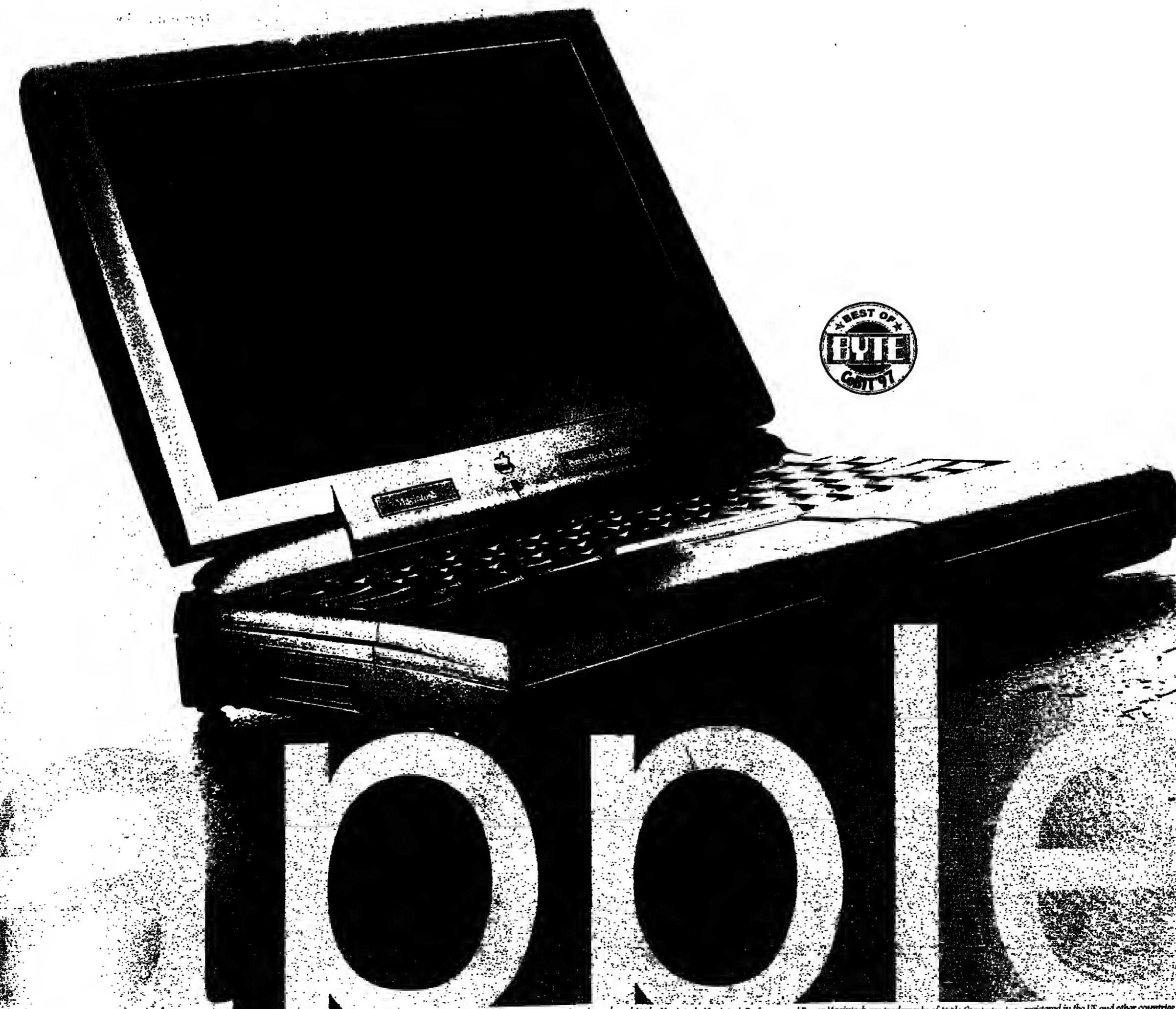
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international

Jospin names ministers for left-wing rule

Paris (Reuters) — Lionel Jospin, the new Socialist Prime Minister, formed France's new left-wing government yesterday comprising 14 full ministers, with the Socialist Martine Aubry, as his number two, holding a superministry for employment and social solidarity.

President Jacques Chirac's office announced that Dominique Strauss-Kahn, author of the Socialist Party's economic platform in the parliamentary election which ended last Sunday, was appointed minister of economics, finance and industry.

Hubert Vedrine, former chief-of-staff to the late president François Mitterrand, was appointed foreign minister, and Alain Richard, a Socialist budget expert, will be defence minister.

Socialist Elisabeth Guigou was appointed justice minister, and Mr Jospin's close adviser Claude Allegre, a university professor, minister of education, research and technology. The Prime Minister's other closest political associate, Daniel Vaillant, was named minister for relations with parliament.

Jean-Pierre Chevenement, leader of the anti-Maastricht Citizens' Movement, was named interior minister, and Communists Jean-Claude Gayssot and Marie-George Buffet were appointed, respectively, minister of infrastructure, transport and housing and minister of youth and sports.

Catherine Trautmann, the mayor of Strasbourg, will be minister of culture and communications and government spokeswoman, and Louis Le Penec takes charge of agriculture and fisheries. Both are Socialists.



ence of the delicate art of "co-habitation" — power-sharing between a president and government of different parties. He is also a leading experts on strategy and international relations.

Mr Vedrine, 49, who takes a portfolio that will involve travelling abroad with President Chirac, earned his spurs as diplomatic adviser, strategic affairs adviser, spokesman and chief aide to Mr Mitterrand. "He knows the ministry inside out," a foreign ministry source said.

He has criticised Mr Chirac's moves to bring France back into Nato's US-led military wing, saying Paris should not make concessions without achieving a real shift of power to the Europeans within the alliance.

Bravo: A supporter at a rally in Avignon for Lionel Jospin who yesterday formed a government with 14 full ministers

Photograph: Brian Harris



significant shorts

Italy opts for new 'presidential' system

Italy made its first important step yesterday towards reforming its chaotic political system.

By a slim majority, a special commission voted in favour of a "semi-presidential" model along French lines, giving increased powers to a directly elected head of state and maintaining a relatively weak executive answerable to parliament. The decision was an embarrassment for the commission's president, Massimo D'Alema, of the left-wing PDS, who had pleaded for a British-style system with a strong prime minister. On the right, it was viewed as a half-satisfactory step towards full presidential rule along US lines.

Andrew Gumbel — Rome

Pakistan eyes Indian missiles

Pakistan's Army chief, General Jehangir Karamat, warned yesterday that his country had to develop a means of deterring or defeating a missile attack from India. "In the absence of reassurances, we would have no option but to go ahead with the development of an indigenous capability," he said. This is taken to mean that Pakistan will also deploy ballistic missiles. There have been reports that Pakistan has obtained missiles from China, which Islamabad denies. The general was reacting to reports that India had moved Prithvi missiles to the border with Pakistan.

Christopher Bellamy

Cook praises British staff

Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, paid tribute to the British High Commissioner in Sierra Leone, Peter Penfold, and his staff, who managed the evacuation of 2,500 foreign nationals, sometimes under fire. They were finally airlifted from the former British colony by US Marines on Tuesday. "We are very, very proud of the work that has been done by our staff there," Mr Cook said. "I would pay tribute to Peter Penfold and all those who worked with him, and express also our personal relief that we have been able to get them out of Sierra Leone. It is a tribute to their courage that they stayed to the very last minute and left only when further presence would play no useful part."

Christopher Bellamy

Asylum seeker dies in fire

One man died and 53 people, including nine children, were injured in a fire in an asylum seekers' hostel in the southern German town of Friedrichshafen. Police were not sure what caused the blaze, but said that an arson attack could not be ruled out. Reuters — Friedrichshafen

Iraq oil-for-food deal extended

The UN Security Council agreed unanimously to extend an oil-for-food deal to Iraq for another six months despite complaints from Washington and Baghdad about the programme. The 15-member council refused Iraqi requests to increase the amount of oil it can sell to buy food and medicine for its people suffering the effects of six years of sanctions.

AP — New York

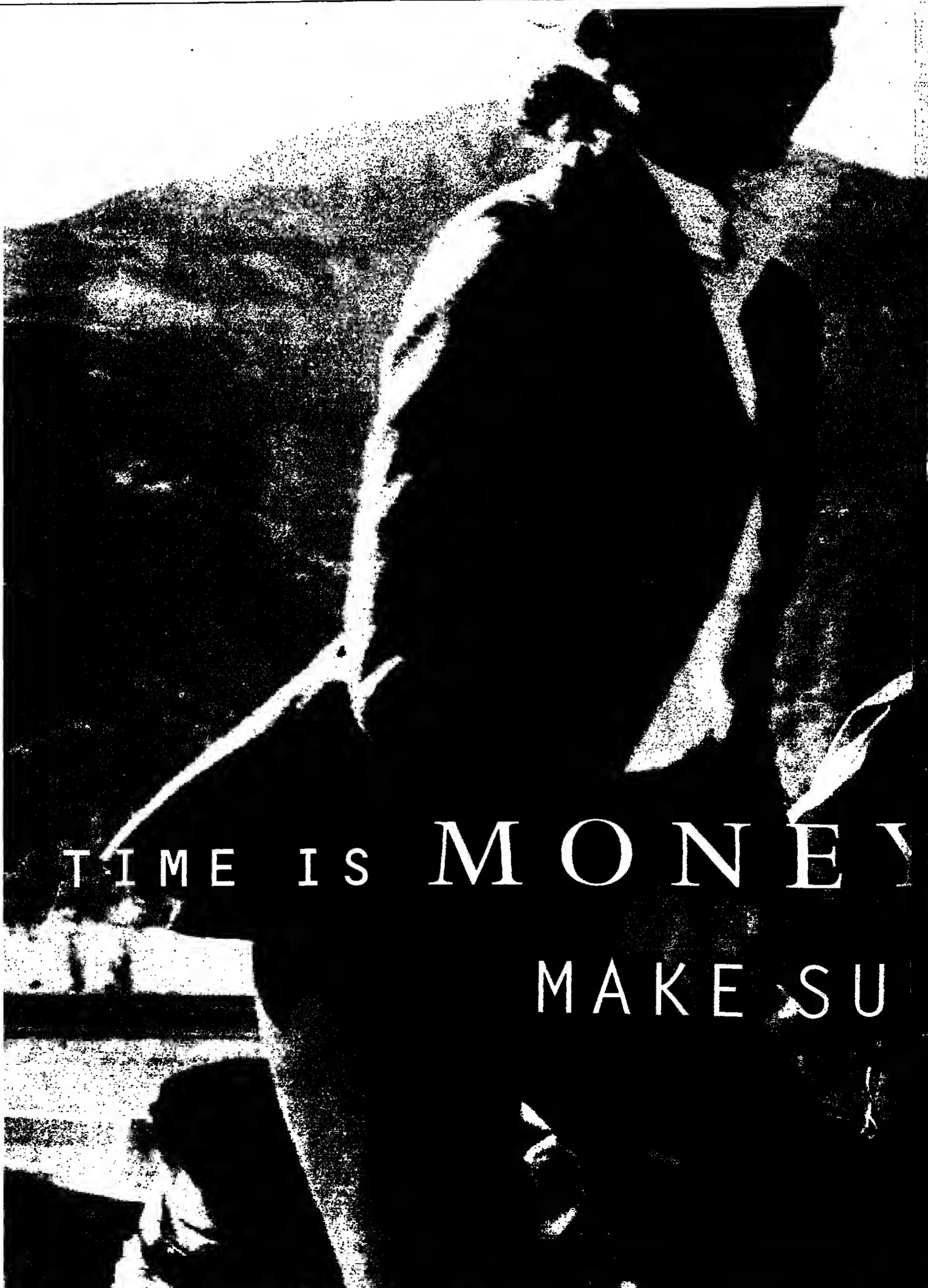
Tapie gets six more months

A French court sentenced jailed bankrupt Bernard Tapie to six more months in prison on tax evasion charges for passing off pleasure cruises on his luxury yacht as business expenses. The former cabinet minister is already serving an eight-month sentence for evading more than FF12m (£1.3m) in taxes.

Reuters — Paris

Double agents, double deal

The head of Russian intelligence has made a public appeal to Russians spying for foreign powers — call our hotline and become double agents. The deal from Moscow's chief spycatcher is simple. Own up, and you can go on taking money from your foreign paymasters. Keep quiet, and we will get you in the end... Reuters — Moscow



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Chancellor's credibility
writes Imre Karacs in B

The weather left

Naked emperor greets young pretender

Tony Blair's visit comes when the German Chancellor's credibility is in shreds, writes Imre Karacs in Bonn

The moment Helmut Kohl had long dreamed of is approaching. Tomorrow, the last of the continent's Old Guard plays host to a British prime minister unburdened by a visceral fear of Europe, the first such specimen to alight in Bonn during the Chancellor's 15-year reign.

There will be a meeting to savour, even if the symbolism of it all may not rub off on Mr Kohl the way he had hoped. When Tony Blair swept to victory last month, the Chancellor perceived a defeat for Euro-scepticism and, by extension, a triumph of his own creed.

But his ever more strident domestic opposition is deciphering a different writing on the wall: "In England and France the policy you have been pursuing for years has failed," claimed Oskar Lafontaine, the Social Democrat leader, at yesterday's stormy session of the Bundestag.

The German left naturally has an ideological axe to grind, but the feeling that Mr Kohl's European vision is a gross distortion of reality breaches political divides. Was it not, after all, the reactionary Bundesbank allied with conservative MPs that thwarted the gold thief of the century?

The misjudged attempt to siphon off the Bundesbank's gold for the sake of monetary union has torn Mr Kohl's credibility to shreds, not just among the banking fraternity, but also among ordinary Germans. The self-crowned emperor of Europe was caught with no clothes on, and however he dresses up now, he will henceforth always seem naked.

In yesterday's parliamentary debate, provoked by an opposition motion of no confidence in the Finance Minister, Theo Waigel, the Chancellor tried without conviction to rekindle



Going for gold: Helmut Kohl declared in yesterday's debate he would do everything to keep the single currency on course

Photograph: Fritz Reiss/AP

the old flame: "We need the single European currency," Mr Kohl declared. "It is the basic precondition for peace and freedom and for building the common European house ...

The federal government, my coalition, and above all myself, will do everything – everything – to ensure that the time-table and the criteria are adhered to." Everything, including cook-

ing the books, Italian-style, the cynics muttered.

The massed ranks of government MPs – united for the day – managed to see off the motion with 17 votes to spare,

but they have yet to demonstrate that they can agree on anything else. The budget for this year and next has a huge hole because the squabbling coalition parties are unable to unite behind an alternative source of revenue.

In the resulting deadlock, which could still bring Mr Kohl down 15 months before the scheduled elections, Germany's effort to meet the Maastricht criteria goes begging. "Three point nought is three point nought," chants the Finance Minister, but three point five is going to be, according to all the experts.

That would not be such a big problem, had Mr Kohl not locked the rest of Europe into the 3 per cent cage. The German government's posturing now smacks, according to Mr Lafontaine, of "cynicism towards the other EU member states".

Basking in the undying hatred of Italy and the other countries of the "Club Med" for opposing their applications, Mr Kohl has now been confronted unexpectedly with a French government

that may no longer play ball. He tried to make light of it yesterday, declaring that "we should not concern ourselves so much with what other member states are doing to qualify for [Maastricht] criteria". Political developments in the neighbourhood should not give rise to speculation whether they are still on course for EMU," he added.

But the awkward "neighbourhood" will limit Germany's room for manoeuvre and, conversely, create opportunities for the new British government. Tomorrow's first official meeting between the *ancien régime* and New Labour, in conjunction with the fresh winds blowing from Paris, is seen in Germany as a turning point in the continental power game.

Mr Blair comes to Bonn staking a claim for a place in the top rung of European politics; a niche in the triangle that London hopes will replace the Franco-German axis. Despite the lukewarm noises emanating from Bonn, the German government has been impressed with the Blair team's straightforward in Europe, and appears to relish the chance of working with or against Mr Blair, rather than his unfathomable predecessor.

For the moment, Anglo-German acrimony will lie buried. The British government has already stated that it will not obstruct the conclusion of the Inter-governmental Conference, and has laid all its cards on the table. Nevertheless, the differences will be plain to see. Mr Kohl will not enjoy being seen with an equal a generation his junior. The impression that a patriarch well past the age of natural retirement will be meeting the young pretender will be hard to avoid.

PRESS FREEDOM BAROMETER



1 Journalist killed

Chad. On 10 May three journalists from the privately owned television channel MIV were kidnapped near Sankt-Michel, bringing to seven the number of journalists currently held hostage. In 1997, six journalists were released by their captors.

25 Journalists arrested

Egypt. A member of parliament belonging to the majority party, caught rappelling during a parliamentary debate by a photographer, wants to ban journalists from entering parliament. "I was unwell and lay down on a chair", he said in his defence.

81 Journalists in jail

63 Journalists threatened and harassed

30 Media banned

Number of countries, among the 185 members of the United Nations, where conditions for the press are:

CORRECT 63 DISRESPECTFUL 73 UNPREDICTABLE 20

Journalists killed 1

Journalists arrested 25

Journalists in jail 81

Journalists threatened and harassed 63

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obituaries / gazette

James Thin

University cities are enhanced by famous and distinguished specialist bookshops. Oxford has Blackwell's, Cambridge has Heffers and Edinburgh has Thin's. Across the street from the Old Quadrangle of Edinburgh University in South Bridge is the sprawling, shambling premises of James Thin, a haunt of many scholars and antiquaries, with a world-wide reputation.

At the centre of its business over four decades, from 1949 to 1990, was the bustling, athletic figure of James ("Jimmy") Thin, great-grandson of that James Thin who founded the firm in 1848, man of letters, mountaineer, and descendant of the Edinburgh Enlightenment. Sir Edward Appleton, Nobel prizewinning physicist and vice-chancellor, opined to my parents that Thin's had become a department of the university; and *de facto* it was just that. Indeed, for most of the last century, James Thin was the official publisher of the university in an age when Edinburgh was the printing centre of the world. Generations of undergraduates and postgraduates have browsed and often bought (though not always were purchased made) in its tolerant atmosphere.

After the Second World War Jimmy Thin set the tone. Ainslie Thin, one of the leading spirits of the current United Kingdom book trade and now the company's chairman, was joint managing director with his cousin and enjoyed an excellent relationship with him. He says: "In the business, Jimmy was always happier to be a real bookseller than an administrator. He very much enjoyed, and appreciated the im-

tance of talking to his customers and indeed writing to the thousands of his customers, many of them overseas, who wrote in to enquire about books — many of these customers became his friends."

I come into the category of customer who became friend. The trouble to which he would go was infinite. In 1955, for my Christmas vacation reading, my university supervisor, the economist Harry Johnson, had told me to study Professor Johnny Von Neumann's *Theory of Games* and had lent me his own personal copy. Horror of horrors, my suitcase in which I had the volume was pinched. Distracted, I went to Jimmy Thin.

Sympathetic to my plight, he went to the trouble of borrowing a copy of this then obscure work from a friend of his in the university, to let me get on with my studying — and 10 days later somehow got a replacement volume from London. He insisted that he would take cost price! One does not forget these things. I joined the ranks of Thin's lifelong customers.

Jimmy Thin left Loretto in 1942 and joined the Army at the first possible opportunity. It was characteristic that he should opt to go out to the Gurkhas in India and used his off-duty time to climb mountains and to learn to speak fluent Urdu. He never pretended that he had been in the thick of the fighting in Burma and was modest about his war service, which I am told by others was enormously to his credit. He returned to take a degree in languages and literature at Edinburgh University and was inspired by the Professor of German, Walter Horace Bruford.

The family wisely determined that he should not go straight in to the family firm but, like a scion of a noble house in the Middle Ages, should be apprenticed to another baron's court. Therefore he was despatched to Cambridge for six months, to Bowes and Bowes, and for another six months to a bookshop in Zurich, before he returned to the family business. Even then he was told to be a part-time publisher with Oliver & Boyd in Edinburgh, specialising in publishing scholarly and theological books.

Tam Dalyell

James Thin, bookseller: born Edinburgh 26 November 1923; partner, James Thin 1949-73; joint managing director, James Thin Ltd 1973-90; married 1956 Marjorie Philpot (four sons); died Edinburgh 1 June 1997.

Thin himself made three English translations of German fairy stories into English, R. Bamberger's *My First Big Story Book* (1963), *My Second Big Story Book* (1966) and *My Third Big Story Book* (1967), all of which were later reissued by Penguin.

In his business Jimmy Thin is remembered by his colleagues for his prodigious energy. He didn't simply tackle problems, he attacked problems. Above all he loved books, he read books and he respected books. Many hundreds of his customers sought his advice when they were about to travel, or about to study a subject, as to what they should read. He was discerning, impatient of badly written books, keenly interested in good authors and had not the slightest hesitation in telling customers not to waste their time, even if it meant that his shop was deprived of a sale.

Even in a city where a large number of the citizens have an extensive knowledge of antiquarian books he was highly regarded and frequently to be seen enjoying himself at auction. He said computers gave him no pleasure, but he learnt to use them. His business became bigger and thrived, although one sometimes felt that he himself regretted this.

Outside business, Thin had many interests. He was a member of the "Monks of St Giles" — an Edinburgh literary society which indulges in literary conversation and the reading of poetry, some of it very amusing, written by the members of the coterie. He was a mountaineer and walked on the hills with Marjorie, his wife of 40 years. They spent a lot of time on the magic island of Barra, where he had a small cottage, and where he could get away from crowds. He was a champion of wilderness.

Thin had bagged every Munro — that is, climbed every mountain above 3,000ft in Scotland — apart from one rather simple slope. He was saving this for his 80th birthday.

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Jacobs playing Kay Stammers in the Wightman Cup at Wimbledon, June 1936

Photograph: AP

Helen Jacobs

Helen Jacobs, the great American tennis player, was always known as "Helen II". She was overshadowed by an even greater Californian Helen Wills Moody. They were the great rivals of the 1930s, competition between them dubbed "The Battle of the Helens" by the US press. Jacobs — three years the junior — was forced to play second fiddle to Moody, who beat her in four Wimbledon finals between 1929 and 1938. However Jacobs did claim the Wimbledon crown in 1936 when she defeated Hilde Sperling of Denmark, 6-2, 6-4, 7-5. Jacobs was also runner-up to Dorothy Round in 1934.

Jacobs won only one of her 11 head-to-head meetings with Moody and that was in the US national final at Forest Hills Tennis Stadium in 1933. It was tainted by controversy when Moody retired with a back injury when trailing 8-6, 3-6, 3-0. It was her first defeat since 1926.

Jacobs went on to win four successive US titles, from 1932 to 1935, and in 1936 was ranked No 1 in the world. She should have beaten Moody in the 1935 Wimbledon final where she held a match point in the deciding set but everything went against her. She lost the point and the next three games for the match.

Stockily built, Jacobs was a great fighter. She had a powerful service and smash and a sound backhand, but she never learned to hit a flat hand drive, despite her friendship, and some coaching, from the great tennis player Bill Tilden.

Jacobs played a big part in the US run of successes over Great Britain in the now-defunct Wightman Cup from 1927 to 1939. Such was her popularity at home that she was named

America's best sportswoman in 1943. She was a pioneer of female players wearing shorts; having been refused permission to wear them at the Wightman Cup in 1933, she appeared in shorts later that year at US championships.

During the Second World War, Jacobs joined the US navy intelligence service and reached the rank of commander, one of only five women to do so. In 1947 she became a professional player. She also became a prolific writer of tennis books and schoolgirl stories, a farmer and a sportswear designer. She was elected to the International Tennis Hall of Fame in 1962.

Bill Edwards

Helen Hull Jacobs, tennis player: born Globe, Arizona 6 August 1908; died Easthampton, New York 2 June 1997.



Kirkhope: spirit of '68

which he has been forced to drop. British cinemakers of the last quarter of a century owe much to a man determined to widen the range of images available to British audiences. The British film industry has lost one of its most important players.

Colin MacCabe

Anthony James Henry Kirkhope: film distributor: born Dunbarton 10 October 1949; married 1994 Eva Tarr; died London 29 May 1997.

Alexander Kazhdan

Alexander Kazhdan was a giant among Byzantinists in a subject which tends to giants — and gigantomania. The towering authority of his 50 years of publication stands upon an undeviating intellectual career which simply ignored the climate, whether in Stalin's Moscow or Clinton's Washington.

Kazhdan was born in Moscow in 1922. In 1944 he married Musya Ivanskaya, who did feel the cold but became the model of a dissident's wife. The poor eyesight which saved Alexander Kazhdan from call-up to the Great Patriotic War was later to threaten drivers on the Washington Beltway. Instead he enrolled with E.A. Kosminsky, the historian of medieval England, who drafted Kazhdan into Byzantine Studies, then being revived by the French Annales School, then already running its course. Was he now going to be a wimp on the East? But what most shocked Kazhdan, in February 1979, was that we did not know how to deal with snow in Birmingham. Scornful, he climbed straight up on to the roof of my house to see it down.

Kazhdan spent the remainder of his life at Dumbarton Oaks, Harvard University's Byzantine research outstation in Washington, which is a posh swimming pool attached to an incomparable library in a house with echoes of Stravinsky where, if he had wished, Kazhdan could have ordered filing cards the size of bedsheet. He did not. His own cards held the matter of three great books: *People and Power*, with Giles Constable (1982); *Literature*, with Simon Franklin (1984); and *Change*, with Ann Epstein (1990); and finally his edition of *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (1991), a massive undertaking which he had first mooted in the 1940s.

Dumbarton Oaks had perhaps hoped to exhibit a giant from the East, but some were unimpressed by Kazhdan's candour which was as absolute as his own self-confidence. To younger scholars, especially, this combination was irresistible. In turn, Kazhdan was perhaps most disconcerted by the way individuals chopped up his subject in the West; he goaded younger ones to collaborate on his grand projects. Perhaps Dumbarton Oaks was too soft a bed. Kazhdan offered academic beds which became harder the closer one got to him. Musya bottled berries for the bruised.

Kazhdan was not a great frequenter of the Cosmopolitan Club in Washington. He preferred breakneck rambles to the Potomac Falls. Could the new generation of students keep up with him? Certainly they hung on to his wry wit as much as those he had taken mustering in the Moscow woods, where his roots ran deepest.

Gladstone, another candidly confounding giant, wished to die in church, somehow without disturbing others. Kazhdan died by the swimming pool at Dumbarton Oaks. He might have chosen the place, and his wish to disturb Byzantinists still abed will be seen to by his students.

Anthony Bryer

Alexander Petrovich Kazhdan, Byzantine historian: born Moscow 3 September 1922; married 1944 Rimma (Musya) Ivanskaya (one son); died Dumbarton Oaks, Washington DC 29 May 1997.

CORRECTION: The photograph illustrating yesterday's obituary of Nikolai Tikhonov was not of the politician but of his namesake the Russian writer (1896-1979).

Thin: champion of wilderness

Tony Kirkhope

For three decades Tony Kirkhope rode the tiger of independent film distribution, bringing films from all over the world to Britain and finding audiences for them.

He combined an intense commitment to cinema as a medium of ideas and a force for social change, with the entrepreneurial skills and instincts of a studio boss *manqué*. But perhaps his greatest gift was for the business of living. There was no situation so grim, no cash-flow crisis so acute that it was not the material for a rolling sequence of jokes as Kirkhope reviewed the situation in relation to the current global balance of forces between left and right, the aesthetics of cinema and the sexual peccadilloes of his current creditor.

He was born in 1949. After a childhood in South Wales which left him a socialist of a kind in which these Blairite days should probably be described as Neanderthal, Kirk-

hope took a degree in engineering at Nottingham University in the late Sixties before working in industry around Cardiff in a variety of junior managerial jobs. He also managed an unlikely spell as a physics teacher in a Dagenham school before the man and the hour were brought together when he joined the Other Cinema as a part-time bookkeeper in 1972.

The Other Cinema had been founded in an attempt to provide both exhibition and distribution for the global wave of alternative films produced in the aftermath of '68. With his typical financial acumen, Kirkhope set about splitting the distribution business from the cinema so that when the cinema bit the dust, the distribution library from a new base in Little Newport Street continued to bring the work of film-makers like Jean-Luc Godard and Chantal Akerman, Joris Ivens and Ousmane Sembene to the

Metro and the resultant Metro Tartan label brought the best of contemporary cinema and many classic titles into Britain's video shops. The partnership with McAlpine, a scion of a family whose name is more readily associated with building and the Conservative Party than the cultural industries was an unlikely one. However, they made a formidable team and as Metro Cinemas expanded, with a cinema at Henley the first of several planned, there were ambitious plans for moves into production and more mainstream distribution.

It can only be idle surmise as to how this unrepentant *sotzame-hutard* would have carried his vision of a cinema of ideas and different to all those elements of the counterculture which were one of the legacies of the Sixties.

In 1991, in the wake of Gibson's departure to BFI producer, Kirkhope formed a partnership with Hamish

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The House of Lords rejected the decision of the Court of Appeal ordering specific performance by Argyll (Holdings) Ltd of a covenant to a lease of supermarket premises in the Hillsborough Shopping Centre in Sheffield.

Argyll had decided in August 1995 to close their Safeway supermarket in the shopping centre because it was losing money. That was a breach of a covenant in the lease, which positively obliged them to keep the premises open for retail trade during the usual hours of business.

Argyll admitted the breach and in an action by the landlord, the Co-operative Insurance Society Ltd, consented to an order for damages to be assessed. The Court of Appeal, reversing the trial judge, ordered that the covenant be specifically performed.

The only means available to the court to enforce its order

possibly be regarded as sufficiently precise to be capable of specific performance.

The Court of Appeal had also thought that, once Argyll had been ordered to comply with the covenant, it was "inconceivable that they would not operate the business efficiently", but it was wrong for the court to speculate about whether Argyll might voluntarily carry on business in a way which would relieve the court of having to construe its order.

The question of certainty must be decided on the assumption that the court might have to enforce the order according to its terms.

All three judges in the Court of Appeal had taken a very poor view of Argyll's conduct. Although any breach of covenant was regrettable, however, the exercise of the discretion whether or not to grant specific performance started from the fact that the covenant had been broken. The interests of both parties in the present case were purely financial: there was no element of personal breach of faith.

No criticism could be made of the way the judge had exercised his discretion. The Court of Appeal should not have interfered.

Kate O'Hanlon, Barrister

Safeway could not be compelled to trade

LAW REPORT

5 June 1997

Seward (Timus Sainsbury) for Argyll Stores (Holdings) Ltd; House of Lords (Lord Brown-Wilkinson, Lord Slynn of Hadley, Lord Hoffman, Lord Hope of Craighead and Lord Clyde); 21 May 1997

An order for specific performance of a covenant in a lease, which effectively obliged the tenant to carry on his business, should not have been made.

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ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

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OBITUARIES

Dr Stephen Henry, 30 May, died suddenly and unexpectedly in Cambridge. Dr Howe, aged 63, is survived by his wife, Maxine Howe, and beloved daughter, Sophie. His long-time partner Linda. Funeral service will be held at Fulbourn Cemetery, Cambridge, at 11.30am on Friday 6 June 1997. Contact Mr Brian Warner, Funeral Director, at 01223 240258.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR GAZETTE BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding anniversaries. In Memoriam should be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5HT, telephone 0171-293 2011, fax 0171-293 2012, or e-mail to 0171-293 2010, and are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra). OTHER Gazette announcements notices, functions, forthcoming marriages. Marriages must be submitted in writing (or faxed) and are charged at £6.50 a line. VAT extra. They should be accompanied by a daytime telephone number.

The Independent's main switchboard number is 0171-293 2000.

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Banish all the dishonourable honours

Under the Tories the stables got into an unpleasant state. It is going to take Labour some time to muck them out. As an introduction to its work in cleansing British public life, the abandonment of honours by MPs for political service is welcome. But there is much more to be done, to modernise and rationalise the effluent growth in recent years of decorations, gongs, places, preferments and *petits douceurs*. And the place to start is the honours system.

Let's first say clearly there is a strong case for identifying individuals who have conspicuously served the public and giving them some title or label as a sign of general thanks. But more important than the process by which the honour is delivered are the criteria of merit. Most recipients of the "lesser" honours, at present the Members and Commanders of the British Empire, are ordinary people who have been identified by neighbours or local authorities as distinctly worthy. Those are honourable honours. People work hard running Scout troops. Some slave on behalf of voluntary organisations. Others, paid public servants, stand out in the local mind as performers above and beyond the call of duty. Britain needs to have a scheme by which – preferably by means of local nomination – such people can be distinguished. Pay is not the only mark of success; or should not be. These alternative

rewards can strengthen the bonds of civil society.

But such a scheme has no need of the pseudo-medieval flummery which surrounds British honour-giving. As long as Britain remains a monarchy, the agent for dispensing the gong will be the Queen and her successors. But a clear distinction has to be made between the monarch's personal awards and honours of state. In the former category are those royal honours created by the Stuarts and Hanoverians for their people of the bedchambers, horse-groomers, maids-in-waiting and pastry-cooks, plus the decorations such as the Order of Merit which are in the sovereign's personal gift. Historically speaking, the dividing line is around 1900. After that date the "royal" orders were created for political purposes: it is no coincidence that the great boom in orders of chivalry occurred when the corrupt David Lloyd George was prime minister.

Queen Elizabeth is not to be blamed for the profligacy of her grandfather in creating imperial orders, sashes and decorations. In an ideal world the Order of the British Empire would be replaced by something more fitting to a 21st century secular culture with no imperial aspirations. But if the orders are kept, the important thing is to ensure that the recipients deserve the honour. Here is where Labour should direct its attention. The habit has grown

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up that certain kinds of public official, specifically civil servants, expect to get certain kinds of honour. A deputy secretary in Whitehall (grade II) expects to get a Companion of Honour after a certain number of years. Knight-hoods come to permanent secretaries like manna from heaven, just as promotions in the order of St Michael and St George come to diplomats as they move embassies. It is ridiculous.

It also subverts the principle on which all organisations, let alone public service organisations should operate – all staff, so long as they are properly treated and decently paid, should give of their best as a matter of course. Once it might have been true that honours were a substitute for adequate payment for civil servants. Nowadays Whitehall staff are reasonably paid.

Honours that come automatically from tenure of a place or position, that go with the job, whether to under-secretaries, chairs of quangos or egregiously loyal backbench Tory MPs, are sometimes a mild dishonour. Why? Because they can encourage timidity and creepy conformity in a society which needs neither. How many civil servants (or vice-chancellors for that matter) have "kept their noses clean".

not "rocked the boat" in order not to offend and so be struck off the list of nominees for honour?

Labour needs to do two things. One is to carry forward the process of reform begun, to his credit, by John Major. The public has been let in and its role in nominations and selections should be expanded. Why shouldn't people be asked about suitable candidates? Meanwhile the process of decision in which names are tossed between civil servants and politicians should be scrutinised. The criteria applied by the honours-givers should be clear and public. They also need to be elastic, since those who finally decide need some discretion. Performing artists and sports people pose problems. It would be invidious to exclude all actors and soccer players from inclusion even though to give a going to all full-backs who do charitable work would be to exhaust the stock of medals pretty quickly.

The second is to review the honours themselves. Just as too many people get honours simply because of the job they hold, so there are also too many honours, a great dusty hierarchy that progresses upwards in degrees so complex that it takes a Roy Strong to find them interesting. Just what does a Knight Commander-hood mean on the eve of the 21st century? A government which has promised to purge the upper chamber of parliament of the

hereditary principle should have no compunction about phasing out titles. There will always be – we hope – company directors, entrepreneurs, scientists, public servants, even MPs, who are undeniably whose contribution to the life and work of the country is outstanding. Some form of government recognition is appropriate. But let it be a modern and modest honour, a source of quiet pride, and not the tinkling anachronism of sirs and dames.

A sparky idea from the greens

Green campaigners have too often sought prohibitions and government intervention to secure their often admirable ends, instead of working with the grain of public opinion and consumer choice. Yesterday's proposal by the World Wide Fund for Nature to allow consumers to choose electricity generated from renewable sources is a good one. When supply is deregulated there is no technical or commercial reason why households should not specify the national source of the power they use. Companies such as SWEB are on board. The next test will be the willingness of the public to pay a little extra for green fuel.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Irish famine lessons still to be learnt

Sir: Ruth Dudley Edwards' criticism of Tony Blair's "apology" for British government inaction during the Irish famine (3 June) owes more to "revisionist" wishful thinking than historical accuracy.

She would have done better to have consulted the words of the responsible ministers and administrators than rely on the self-deceiving dogmatism of James Wilson, Lord Lieutenant Clarendon repeatedly berated his colleagues for allowing the Irish poor to die in droves; Prime Minister Russell denounced the "crude Trevelyanism" of the Treasury and British middle-class opinion that refused the (relatively modest) sums necessary to purchase relief supplies in 1847-9; and, most damning, Chief Poor Law Commissioner Edward Twisleton resigned in March 1849 on the grounds that "the destitution here is so horrible, and the indifference of the House of Commons to it is so manifest, that he is an unfit agent of a policy that must be one of extermination".

Unfortunately James Wilson's obsessive view that the famine had been sent to reform the Irish character, and that state aid would impede such a desirable outcome, was widespread in British public opinion and within the weak and divided Whig administration. Not all could have been saved, but, in the view of many contemporaries, hundreds of thousands perished needlessly as a consequence of government neglect.

Tony Blair's carefully chosen words, which acknowledge a great historical wrong, should be welcomed. They are in accord with the sophisticated understanding of the meaning of the Famine that President Mary Robinson has done so much to promote in Ireland in the last two years. It is regrettable that "revisionist" polemics – as outdated and unbalanced in their own way as the ultra-nationalist rhetoric of "genocide" – should be directed against such a positive step towards a new Anglo-Irish relationship.

Dr PETER GRAY
Department of History
University of Southampton

Sir: Even in 1933 only 1.4 per cent of the population of Ireland owned all the land. The Irish people were robbed of their birthright by the rapacious landlords who governed the nation, the same members of parliament who, by passing some 400 Enclosure Acts, dispossessed the vast majority of the British people. The Irish had no way to sustain life once the potato blight had destroyed the only crop they could attempt to grow in the miserable marginal land to which they had been driven.

Little has changed except that today the welfare state ensures that starvation no longer kills our people. Throughout Africa, Asia, Central and South America the same land-tenure system that starved the Irish 150 years ago threatens the lives of many millions.

NORMAN H SLATER
Rossendale, Lancashire

Sir: Ruth Dudley Edwards is too complacent about the causes of the Irish famine.

Famine is often the result not of an absence of food but of the inability of many people to buy what is available. That was so in



Ireland's case: only one crop, the potato, failed; and during the famine, food was being exported from Ireland.

It has been said that there has never been a famine in a democracy. The famine in Ireland was not caused by "desperately bad luck", nor even by a fungus, but by a political system that kept a large majority of its inhabitants desperately poor. That political system was largely the creation of England.

MARTIN SMITH
Oxford

Sir: One can cut through a lot of fruitless argument about the potato famine by asking a simple question: would the government of the day have stood idly while a million English peasants died and a further million and a half were forced into emigration? If not, there is a case to answer.

NICK MARTIN-CLARK
London WC1

Sir: Your leading article of 2 June is rightly dismissive of the charge of politicisation of the Civil Service made against the incoming Labour government. Despite all the hullabaloo, all the Government has done is to increase slightly the number of special advisers and to strengthen the political control at Number 10, so lacking under John Major, by appointing two political advisers with executive powers. In contrast to Mrs Thatcher, who politicised civil servants by entitling them to become her personal aides, Tony Blair has made it clear from

the start that his press secretary, Alastair Campbell, and his chief of staff, Jonathan Powell, are political appointees who would have to leave if the Labour government is voted out.

The real questions about the Civil Service are the following.

First, are they in a position to give impartial advice to ministers? I understand that the Prime Minister has sent a memorandum to the Cabinet Secretary, Sir Robin Butler, stressing the importance of the policy advice role of the Civil Service.

Second, are they prepared to carry out swiftly and efficiently ministerial decisions? On this point, the Civil Service is to be congratulated on the smoothness of the handover from a Conservative government which had been in power for 18 years.

Third, are civil servants protected from being required to act in a manner which is unconstitutional, improper or unethical? Since 1995, the Civil Service code, drafted by the Treasury Civil Service Select Committee, has given civil servants the protection of an independent appeals procedure covering these matters.

Lastly, are civil servants as open and as helpful as possible to Parliament, especially when giving evidence to select committees? The resolution on ministerial accountability, drafted by the Public Service Select Committee and overwhelmingly adopted by the House, makes it clear that civil servants have an obligation to

provide full and accurate information to Parliament.

GILES RADICE MP
(Dartford North, Lab)
House of Commons
London SW1

Sir: You are correct when you argue (leading article, 2 June) that it is time for a politicisation of the Civil Service. However this should not involve merely the appointment of more special advisers. There should be a thorough review of the structures of policy formation.

Policy advisers, who are not integrated into the command structure, can be undermined by the Civil Service. An improvement would be the European Union's ministerial cabinet system. This places the political advisers in direct command of the departmental civil servants.

GRAHAM RICHARDS
London EC2

Sir: The Labour MEP Michael Elliott (Letters, 29 May) is ill-informed as well as out of touch with his reforming government.

No other EU member state or applicant would dream of abandoning PR for the European Parliament. Regional lists, as agreed between Mr Elliott's party leadership and the Liberal Democrats, retain (and make more sense of) the constituency link with the MEP.

And it is perfectly possible to

introduce PR in Great Britain in time for the next elections in 1999. The Federal Trust has just produced a rather good pamphlet, by Lord Plant and Michael Steed, which sets out in detail what should be done and how.

What is needed in July is a White Paper on the matter. Before then, at Amsterdam, the European Union should add the phrase "in time for the 1999 elections" to the relevant Article 138(3) of the treaty which prescribes a uniform electoral procedure for the European Parliament.

It would not be the first time that British constitutional history had been made by the Dutch.

ANDREW DUFF
Director, Federal Trust
London SW1

This title was published in early November and topped the hardcover fiction list for five consecutive weeks. Gollancz's sales of *Hogfather* are now in excess of 130,000, and still to sell several hundred copies a week of a

hardback fiction title more than seven months after publication suggests longevity rather than some form of fraud.

COLIN SMYTHE
Crown Scribe Ltd, Publishers
Gerrard's Cross,
Buckinghamshire

Sir: Mateo Colon did not discover the clitoris; he rediscovered it.

JUVENAL MENTIONED IT IN HIS SIXTH SATIRE (c. AD116). The Latin word is *crista*, which also means a cock's comb. The word *clitoris* (Greek) was invented by the anatomist Rufus shortly after Juvenal.

GRAEME FIFE
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This

analysis

Safe in the long arms of the law?

Sexual victimisation of women police officers is still rife, as evidenced by the number of formal complaints being brought. And the usual channels for redress are failing, says Patricia Wynn Davies

Question: what kind of a man takes a pride in arranging plastic penises on a woman's car and attaching condoms to the aerial?

What makes him hide a bag of prawns in her desk drawer to go rancid, creating a smell so bad that a "dirty squad" has to be brought in to fumigate the office?

What sort of men push a truncheon down a woman's legs when she bends down in the meal queue to retrieve something from the floor, then take a photograph and pin it up in the office? Or put up posters of women colleagues saying "I fart in bed", "I could shag you", or "I'm available for a shag"?

Yes, male police officers, those guardians of safety and security the public is supposed to trust. These examples are from real-life experiences of women officers eventually driven to lodge complaints of sexual harassment, women too

afraid to speak out for fear of compromising their jobs or gagged from doing so in return for out-of-court settlements.

Why? Aside from the traditional rationalisation – the one about the "macho" culture being part of the business of hardening up officers – this remains the big unanswered question. What do we know, and what police chiefs are having to come to terms with, is that barely a week goes by without a full-scale sex discrimination case in an industrial tribunal somewhere around the country – while the current level of out-of-court payouts from taxpayers' money could be hundreds of thousands of pounds.

It should all be of the greatest concern to a service that talks the language of equality but where women still account for only around 14 per cent of officers (108,642 men; 18,209 women, according to the latest figures). And the attitude of some forces appears to be hardening, with a greater tendency to insist that women

complainants prove each and every aspect of their allegations in an industrial tribunal rather than settling or mediating complaints and concentrating on tackling the underlying causes.

To the sexual tormentor's stock-in-trade – sexual taunts, innuendo, unwanted advances and physical assaults – are added more insidious forms of harassment, such as interfering with a woman officer's paperwork, arranging for files or case papers to go missing, and, as female officers begin moving up the ranks, victimising women who gain promotion.

Tina Martin, chairman of

the British Association of Women Police and a former Metropolitan Police officer, who has helped a number of women pursue complaints, says: "We now have the phenomenon of PDSO – prolonged distress stress disorder – brought about by the undermining effect of low-level sexual harassment."

The problem is bad enough for the number of complaints in the Metropolitan Police area to have reached three figures since January this year, and the Police Complaints Authority has launched its first investigation into how the Lincolnshire force handled a discrimination complaint from a high-flying woman inspector at Gainsborough police station, Dena Fleming.

Of the cases currently being heard in tribunals, Inspector Fleming's is far and away the most controversial. Nottingham tribunal has already heard how her fate was sealed when one of the male officers she believed had been conspiring against her discovered a tape recorder she had placed in her locker to record colleagues. She was immediately suspended and disciplinary proceedings began against her.

She claims she was ostracised and harassed by male officers who resented her promotion after only two years' experience as a sergeant and her attempts to introduce changes.

Her husband Max, a former Lincolnshire officer, and friends Sergeant Nick Proctor and Constable Chris Wright, have lodged victimisation claims against the force over disciplinary notices that were handed to them after they gave false Fleming their support. Sgt Proctor has told the tribunal that in his 17 years as a police officer he had never witnessed such an orchestrated campaign of hate against a colleague.

While judgment is not expected until the autumn, the story as told by Insp Fleming, one of only 200 women inspectors from a total of 5,200, and her witnesses does not make happy reading. Internal documents before the tribunal described one senior officer as being "obsessed" with her downfall. He was also alleged to have spread rumours about Insp Fleming having an affair when there was no evidence to support them. Giving evidence in the witness box, Insp Fleming said her briefcase had been rifled, her paperwork moved and letters opened. She felt there was a conspiracy against her by officers who disdained her methods, while her superiors did nothing to support her. One of the conspirators, she told the tribunal, had offered her a sexual relationship.

Senior detectives from Nottinghamshire have complained to the tribunal that an investigation into claims of evidence tampering in the Fleming case had been obstructed by officers they were probing.

Female officers in Lincolnshire, as elsewhere, have felt obliged to set up an underground network to help women officers cope with the stress of sexual victimisation. But the network was swiftly labelled the "Witches' Coven", by male officers, says Jane Kitchen, a Lincolnshire Police Federation representative. Ms Kitchen, who has also put her job and promotion prospects on the line by testifying in the Fleming case, told the Nottingham tribunal how the Lincolnshire force went from having a full-time equal opportunities officer between May 1993 and March 1994 to a "consultant" available one or two days a

month.

The most recent report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary, last October, painted a grim picture of a problem not yet fully grasped.

Sexism, racism, barriers to pro-

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SARAH LOCKER
Life was made unbearable, she says, and she was forced to retire eventually on medical grounds



KAREN WADE
One officer is alleged to have asked an arrested glue sniffer if he would like to have sex with her



DENA AND MAX FLEMING
Dena's husband Max, a former officer, and two other police colleagues were handed disciplinary notices after they supported her against sex discrimination

motion and discriminatory bullying are still rife in the police," it said.

The report, like everybody else in the service with an opinion on the subject, urged "perspective" – as Jackie Cole puts it, "there are some smashing guys in the force". But it concluded: "There is a continued and unacceptable level of racist and sexist banter. While more covert and subtle than before, it is nevertheless destructive."

The police service has yet to prove it is really tackling the issue. Nobody has confidence in force grievance procedures.

As the Fleming case has proved, it takes guts for male officers to speak up for female colleagues who have lodged complaints. Once station pressure sparked by a harassment incident begins to build up, a woman may be left with no alternative but to launch what should be a last resort, an industrial claim. Once launched, however, that same pressure – of the "that wouldn't really be in your interests" kind – can lead to the collapse of crucial testimony and back-up.

Such a scenario is the precise opposite of what most women complainants want, says Ms Cole. "Most women simply want the harassment to stop, for it to be recognised and then stop, so that they can carry on with their jobs. They don't want a confrontation."

Typically, the victim is likely to be attractive and have refused "offers", and according to officers handling complaints, the trouble often comes from within the ranks of officers seeking promotion. A perpetrator might "stalk" his victim, perhaps a young probationer worried about being accepted by the boys, with a barrage of propositions, suggestive remarks, "love" notes, queries about the wearing of clean knickers. Others are serial harassers.

The party piece of one officer in charge of a control room was to go along the line of women "undoing" their bras while they were handling calls. When one distraught woman took to wearing a body instead, he responded by ringing her when she was dealing with prisoners to ask what colour flowers she liked. The man has been moved and a woman inspector is acting as mentor to the women he has harassed.

Last November, three Met officers were forced to resign after two of them handcuffed a female officer while the third put his hand up her pullover and touched her breasts.

Allegations of sexual harassment within the North Yorkshire force led to two separate inquiries into out-of-court payouts coupled with no publicity clauses.

If the police service cannot stamp out this kind of harassment, what chance is there for women to secure their fair share of the better jobs, working practices that take more account of family responsibilities and promotions. It leaves Jackie Cole feeling a mixture of anger and sadness. "The sheer stupidity of the behaviour makes me furious."

It's enough to drive you to Nuits-St-Georges

I was on the point of telling you yesterday how I had ended up in a car on the top of a roundabout in Northern Ireland. Well, I was over in Belfast with the group Instant Sunshine at the Belfast Festival, playing two concerts at the Elmwood Hall (which, incidentally, is pronounced in Northern Ireland as it were named after someone called L M Wood). One concert was in the afternoon and one late in the evening, and our sponsors for the event, the local milk marketing board, had decided to take us out for dinner between the two concerts. It is always a bad idea for performers to eat or drink much before a concert, but the chaps from the Milk Marketing Board were not really thinking of us – they were determined to get a good dinner for themselves and would not take no for an answer.

So we were whisked out of Belfast and given a slap-up dinner, at which the sponsors ate and drank mightily and we hardly touched anything, and on the way back our host, now full of wine, failed to spot an approaching

roundabout in the dark and drove straight up the central grassy mound and stopped on top, with the car looking for all the world like some crazy bit of modern sculpture. There was a pause and then he turned round and said genuinely: "Sorry about that, but I swear that roundabout came a good 200 yards earlier than usual..."

That is an example of what Claud Cockburn once called the kind of sey logic peculiar to the Irish. But everyone in the world drives with their own kind of crazy logic, crazy at least to the outsider. The Indians, in our eyes, tend to drive as if they are in the later stages of a grand prix race. I was once overtaken by an Italian, near Naples, in the middle of a traffic jam. The traffic had been motionless for five minutes. Suddenly it eased forward 10 yards. I was slow to react. In a flash, the man behind me had whipped past and eased into his new position, having gained all of two seconds and a lot of pride.

In an Indian city, once, I was being driven by a taxi driver with whom I would no doubt have had an interesting

conversation if we had been able to hear ourselves over the incessant hooting which Indian drivers practise. The hooting rose to a climax at a big crossing which one policeman was attempting to control like an orchestral conductor embarking on a fiendishly difficult new contemporary composition. Suddenly he strode over to the driver, who was patiently waiting for a way to clear. A nation that is used to sitting tight behind the wheel and fuming in silence has no mechanism for expressing rage. We don't have a set of gestures, a ritual of shrugging, hand-waving and fist-flinching

extraordinary. But no more extraordinary than what happens in South America – in Peru, at least, which is the only Latin American country I have knowledge of – where red lights are treated as cautions, nothing more. You only stop at a red light if nothing is coming the other way. Otherwise, you slow down a bit, then go through. Contrast this with traffic lights in Britain which turn red and then stay red. Stay red for five minutes, maybe. Have you noticed that British drivers will wait for red lights to change long after they know they must be stuck, and yet still will not edge out, preferring to hope against hope that they may still change?

How one squares that image of the ultra-cautious British driver with the new growth of road rage I am not sure, though I suspect that the tight-lipped control of one leads straight to the unbuttoned fury of the other. A nation that is used to sitting tight behind the wheel and fuming in silence has no mechanism for expressing rage. We don't have a set of gestures, a ritual of shrugging, hand-waving and fist-flinching

to substitute for actual violence, so I suspect that when we snap go straight from cold reserve to nose-punching.

How the French fit into all this, I am not sure, though I was once very impressed by their forethought at the Place de l'Opéra in Paris. There is a particularly busy traffic build-up there, full of the chance of an accident, and I noticed that they had a big white van parked in one corner labelled "Blood Transfusion Unit", which I assumed had been placed there in anticipation of an accident.

Alas, I was wrong. A French friend told me. It was just taking blood donations.

"If I had been waiting for an accident," he told me later, "it should have been a Wine Transfusion Unit. Most French people do not know their blood group, but we all know our wine group. I, for instance, have a card in my wallet in case of accident which says: 'This man is Nuits-St-Georges positive'."

I think he was joking. Good heavens. Does this mean the French have a sense of humour after all? But that is another story.



Miles Kington

لبنان من الأصل

Campaigners who blend reason with grandstanding

Greenpeace's call for a ban on all oil exploration is unnecessary, says Richard D North

Michael Meacher, the environment minister at the Deputy Prime Minister's vast new environment-through-transport department, hinted yesterday at the latest area of bad behaviour upon which his Government was casting a mordant eye. Defending the world against the worst effects of global warming and climate change will require, he told a World Wide Fund for Nature conference, "real changes in the way we travel and use energy, both at home and at work". He stuck to the New Labour manifesto promise to up the ante slightly on the previous administration's promise to reduce emissions of warming gases. The proposals, even if copied around the world, will be wholly ineffective if global warming is half the beast the doomsayers suppose, but at least they'll be painless.

Mr Meacher has already been upstaged. "We have high hopes but low expectations of the new government," said Peter Melchett, Greenpeace's UK director and himself a Labour peer who was a junior minister under old Labour. He was launching the group's dramatic new campaign to stop BP developing an oil field in the deep and stormy waters just west of Shetland. "A new frontier," BP calls it, and is looking forward to seeing oil come ashore this summer.

Greenpeace calls for a self-denying ordinance from the UK which would have the waters left as a frontier against oil development. It refuses to announce its plans for marine direct action, but high jinks on the high seas can clearly be expected. Combating Shell's dumping of Brent Spar was a huge coup; fighting to halt the New Frontier is an irresistible successor.

The campaigners' logic is impeccable, as a new and brilliant little Greenpeace film will ram home in art cinemas shortly: "Within the earth is all the oil we need to set the world on fire," it trumpets. Chris Rose, Greenpeace's deputy director and brightest policy wonk, insists that no industrialised country that takes global warming seriously should be increasing exploration, let alone exploitation, of its fossil fuel reserves. He proposes a phasing out of fossil fuel use within 40 years, and government rules insisting that most of the reserves remain underground. He says that is the only way to spare the world suffering a massive overload of climate-forcing gases.

Nearly everyone concedes that Greenpeace has the beginnings of a point, but hardly anyone takes them seriously. Peter Kassler, now working with the energy and environmental programme at the Royal Institute of International Affairs, is an oil economist who used to be with Shell (which is a partner of BP's in the Atlantic frontier). Typically of the sceptics and the Department of Trade and Industry line, he says: "It's the sort of thing that has a facile appeal, but it's pretty thin. West of Shetlands off its best would be a marginal part of the world's oil supply. If that oil is demanded by consumers around the world it will come from somewhere else, without UK jobs and UK economic benefit. In 1997, the Middle East is relatively peaceful, but any sensible government would like to have flexibility."

But the toughest arguments Greenpeace must face come from people more obviously sympathetic to their cause, and even this campaign. Michael Grubh, a middle-of-the-road green, is putting the finishing touches to a paper which argues that governments are at risk of not noticing how relatively unimportant the world's oil and gas reserves are. "The

amount of carbon in proven oil deposits is rather puny compared with the numbers the climate scientists play with." Greenpeace may say fine, but there will be pressure to burn lots of coal, and it would at least help to lock up the oil and avoid the risk even more firmly. Dr Grubh suggests, rather, that the real goal would be to get the world to eschew the use of coal, which has a far greater capacity to do damage. That approach suggests that we need all the oil we can get as a replacement.

Greenpeace's game is one of alternating reasonableness and grandstanding. Cannily, Mr Rose's phase-out would give us longer to convert to non-fossil energy than the business-as-usual scenario, or even the regulatory framework now proposed. That is important: everyone agrees that, sooner or later, renewable energy and conservation must come into their own.

By far the most influential exponent of the "soft energy" path is the American Amory Lovins, who has a tropical climate at his mile-high, solar-powered Rocky Mountain Institute in Colorado, and whose latest co-authored book, *Factor Four*, declares that the world could have twice its present wealth for a halving of its energy take. That is because of the power of double-glazing ("the key to inexpensive buildings is expensive windows") and new engine and fuel technologies for vehicles, among myriad other developments in which, he says, root-and-branch changes in the way we design things will solve problems we knew we might solve, and others we didn't dare hope to cure.

"Oil is going to be rather abundant, and gas more so," he says, "but most reserves will stay in the ground because they are no longer worth burning." He believes that conventional fuels will get cheaper and cheaper, but that renewables will overtake them and be cheaper yet. Moreover, he believes, the new wave of technologies will make renewables more convenient than conventional sources. Cars will become so clean that it will be their number, not their mess, which will pose the problem.

Even Lovins has some sympathy with the Greenpeace view, but only in so far as he thinks that it may be wise to maintain an oil reserve. Otherwise, there is little difference between the Lovins and the emerging industry points of view. Shell's group chief executive and its UK managing director have both recently made speeches pointing out that Shell's planners have posed as a distinct possibility a "dematerialisation" process. The name suggests something out of *Star Trek*, but has been coined for the kind of efficiency that would see the average earthling in 2060 using about the same amount of energy as an Italian in 1970, but living far more comfortably.

Thus Helmut Rothermund, the UK Shell boss, has pleased Greenpeace by accepting that anyone concerned about future climate change can spot the dilemma of future oil use. BP's chief executive was praised by Michael Meacher yesterday for remarks stressing that his firm has now reached the "important point" when its role as a good citizen requires it to work out the implications of being an energy company in a warming world. The campaigners have been less keen to point out that Mr Rothermund sees no contradiction between believing, as he does, that much oil may well stay in the ground because of falling demand and the viability of alternatives, and simultaneously wanting to get at the rich UK reserves in the eastern Atlantic. BP agrees very heartily, at least with the last bit of that.

GREENPEACE

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The Gazelle D'Or in Taroudant is one of the finest hotels in Morocco. Jacques Chirac has stayed there, as have umpteen spoilt rock stars, blocked writers, lotus-eating politicians and belated royals. Fergie and Johnny Bryant chilled out at the Gazelle at the height of their star-cross'd romance. The swimming pool alone has seen sights of unbuttoned celebrity that it would blush to tell its grandchildren about. So it was with a lively interest that a friend of mine wondered about the identity of the chap sitting on the next sun-lounger along from him, a couple of weeks ago. The man was kitted out in full dandy-by-the-pool regalia in a stardom Ralph Lauren creation of horizontal stripes with matching beach shorts, the ensemble topped off with a wide-brimmed Australian bush hat, as worn by Barry McKenzie in the Sixties strip cartoon. It took a certain amount of neck-craning to establish that the fashion victim beneath was Michael Portillo, enjoying a much-needed holiday with his wife after his upsetting experience in the small hours of 2 May. And how piquant to discover what the great man was about in his north African hideaway: volume one of Proust's *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu*, the longest novel ever published. Just the thing to embark on, when you've several free months stretching before you.

My conversations with other men have taken a rather smutty turn this week, and all because of Louise Young and the *Unconscious Willy*. Ms Young is a phenomenally blonde journalist and biographer, whose first novel *Baby Love* is published this summer. Meeting her at a party to wish bon voyage to Joanna Coles, *The Guardian's* glint-eyed star feature writer who is off to become the paper's New York correspondent, I enquired about the book's



Louisa Young: anatomically adventurous

fortunes. Why, said Ms Young, I happen to have it here, and extracted a proof copy from her clutch bag. Leafing through it, I came quite by accident upon a remarkable sex scene, in which the heroine is assailed by a nasty and bullying man with an erection, slugs him with a poker, lays him out cold and becomes unexpectedly turned on by her own counter-attack. Finding herself in possession, as were, of an aroused *membrum virile* with an unconscious man on the end of it, she proceeds to have sex with it, taking a kind of revenge for all the times she has been mastered by brutal masculinity. Wiping the sweat from my brow, I congratulated Ms Young on a brilliant fantasy, "though of course," I said, "it's anatomically impossible". She bristled, as authors will. "It is not," she said. "I've talked to doctors about it and three out of four said they couldn't swear it wasn't possible." But such things can't happen when you're unconscious, I said. Asleep yes; out for the count, no. The nervous system packs up and ... "One doctor said it was possible if you'd killed somebody and *rigor mortis* was setting in," said the know-it-all Ms Young, "but I had to remind him that there aren't any muscles in the penis."

Blimey, I thought, aren't there? And that, I'm afraid, set the tone for the week. Everywhere, chaps scratched their heads and said "Aren't there?" "Are there?" and "Whereabouts exactly ... ?" They talked about nerves and sinews and engorged tissue and blood and capillaries and spasms this and contraction that; and all the time they revealed, like me, an extraordinary ignorance of their most precious bits. They settled with relief into discussing Ms Young's fictional sex scene and its plausibility level. "Not a chance," said Jeremy Laurence, *The Independent's* magisterial medical correspondent. "Not after being hit by a poker. Now if she'd strangled him, on the other hand ... I rang Ms Young in triumph. "Men," she said, "know nothing about their own willies. We meet a lot more willies than men do ..."

You have to hand it to Madame Louise Beaudoin, Quebec's formidable Minister of Culture. When it comes to linguistic correctness, she walks off with *le bourbon chocolat*. When it comes to the enforced speaking of French in Canada's Francophone province, she is as unmoving as Marshal Pétain. A fascinating article by Mordecai Richler in this week's *New York Times Book Review* explains the extraordinary grip exerted by the French Language Charter and its various ramifications over the past 20 years. The charter's explicit goal is to make French the first language of all citizens of Quebec. And to that end, they make things as hard as possible for English speakers. Shop names have to be rendered in French. Shops whose names end with a matey apostrophe - Gerry's, Nolan's - are forced to revert to Gerry and Nolan. Road signs may be in English as well as French, provided the English version is half the size of the French one. Madame Beaudoin has now ruled that civil servants will in future need special authorisation before they are allowed to make speeches in English. And she has demanded that a hospital take down its



Proust and Portillo - companions in a holiday hideaway

Why, said Ms Young, I have a copy here. Leafing through it, I came upon a remarkable sex scene

john walsh

bilingual signs despite the recent arrival of scores of elderly, English-only patients after the closure of another hospital. If they lose their way in the corridors or cannot find the intensive-care ward because they don't know its French name, that's just *fromage dur*.

The untranslatability of certain words offers moments of amusement. One politician, as *dirigeante* as Mme Beaudoin, pathetically complained "I feel like a foreigner in my own country" because he had seen a sign advertising *Blockbuster Video*. "But how do you translate *Blockbuster Video*?" a journalist asked Mme Beaudoin, who was stuck for a reply. Other linguists get past the language police by being smartly inventive: the word "hamburger" in Quebec has been given a new middle-class sheen and renamed "*le hambourgeois* ...



Old Sparky - the chair with a famously short fuse

But then I don't really get it about Americans. While the whole nation seems to have turned into one gigantic lynch mob, calling for Timothy McVeigh, the Oklahoma City bomber, to be dragged to the electric chair and "fried" (although lethal injection is the worst that the federal law allows), on the other side of the country they've come over all nervous about how the execution furniture actually works. The

oldest electric chair in America, folksily nicknamed "Old Sparky", has just been temporarily de-commissioned by the Supreme Court of Florida. It's 74 years old and famously temperamental: the last hapless victim, one Pedro Medina, virtually exploded, foot-long flames shooting from his head and goitols of smoke pouring from under the mask on his face. A local circuit judge investigated and pronounced that there was nothing "cruel and unusual" about the Floridian chair, but while they are debating it, the chair is out of action. How extraordinary that, once you've gone so far as to sanction the death of someone judged guilty by a jury, and then elect to kill them by whacking 100,000 volts through their body, you should then get all fastidious about the chance that it might hurt a bit. The sub-text is obvious, of course - the Supreme Court just wants a chair whose effects aren't quite so disgustingly obvious to the naked eye. But when it comes to Mr McVeigh and his likely fate, they're probably the only people in the United States who do. Cruel and unusual, eh? I foresee a swift and dramatic return to popularity for "Old Sparky" at a courthouse in Denver, Colorado, very soon.

Her fourth birthday may well be her last, but she isn't ill



In countries like the Gambia, one in four children die before their fifth birthday. The diseases they suffer from differ. But the cause is almost always the same.

Poverty ACTIONAID is working in some of the poorest areas of the world to end this cycle of despair. Helping local communities to provide clean water, education, health, nutrition, food production and a means to generate their own income.

Sponsor a child like Nyana and you'll be helping her family and her whole community. A photograph and regular reports keep you in touch. You will receive messages from the child and can write if you wish.

By becoming a sponsor you'll make all the difference to the life of a child like Nyana.

Please sponsor a child today.

Please send me details about sponsoring a child, or call 01460 61073. I am interested in sponsoring:

Me Where there's greatest need 1686

Me I can't sponsor a child now, but enclose a gift of £

Me enclose £5 to ACTIONAID and send to ACTIONAID PREPRESS

82469, Cheltenham GL2 1ER

I am interested in:

Address:

Telephone:

Fax:

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Postcode:

Date:

Signature:

Printed Name:

Address:

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Postcode:

Country:

Telephone:

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E-mail:

Postcode:

Country:

Telephone:

Fax:

business & city

Business news desk: tel 0171-293 2636 fax 0171-293 2098
BUSINESS & CITY EDITOR: JEREMY WARNER

BT bonus limit doubles to 100% of pay

Chris Godsmark
Business Correspondent

Senior British Telecom directors are set to share in the company's most generous package of bonuses since privatisation, which could in theory give Sir Peter Bonfield, chief executive, a total pay-out of more than £4m.

The short and long-term bonus schemes, detailed in the company's annual report sent to shareholders yesterday, represented BT's long-awaited move to put the pay of British executives on par with their counterparts in the US long-distance operator MCI, which the UK group is in the process of buying for £13bn.

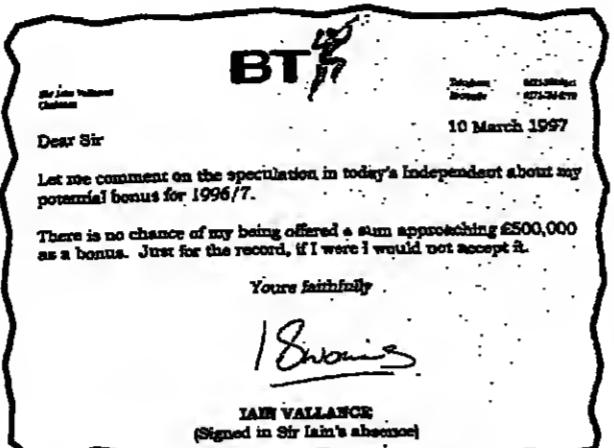
The most generous payouts are to be shared by Sir Peter, and Sir Iain Vallance, chairman, including one-off bonuses in

recognition of their work to put the MCI deal in place.

Both executives, along with the finance director, Robert Brace, have raised their annual cash bonus limit from 50 per cent of salary to 100 per cent of salary from this year, giving Sir Iain and Sir Peter the potential to be "million pound men" for the first time.

Sir Peter will also receive a discretionary bonus on top of his annual bonus of up to £500,000, payable over the next two years, if the merger goes through. The report showed Sir Peter's annual bonus for last year was £225,000, representing 45 per cent of his £498,800 basic salary last year. From this calendar year his salary rose to £570,000.

Sir Iain was paid a "discretionary" bonus of £185,000 last year in recognition of his contribution to the MCI deal, al-



though he had not been actually part of the formal annual bonus scheme.

The payout came on top of a £485,000 basic salary, taking

his total pay including pensions benefits to £698,900. From January this year Sir Iain's basic salary rose to £500,000.

On 10 March Sir Iain wrote

to *The Independent* denying he would receive a £500,000 bonus, after a report suggested he could receive one for the last financial year. His letter continued:

"There is no chance of my being offered a sum approaching £500,000 as a bonus. Just for the record, if I were I would not accept it." It also emerged yesterday that the new contracts with the higher bonus limits for next year, came into effect from 1 April.

A BT spokesman defended the awards and gave a "cast iron" guarantee that none of the three executives would actually receive their full 100 per cent bonuses, despite the changes to the scheme.

"Nobody, but nobody, gets more than their 50 per cent target bonus. Not even God could get a 50 per cent bonus. The 100 per cent figure is simply a con-

tractual matter which is prevailing in other big companies at the moment."

The spokesman also said in practice that Sir Peter's two annual bonuses for this year would not exceed 100 per cent of salary, though in theory they could be worth more than £1m.

On top of the proposed annual bonuses, BT unveiled a new long-term bonus package which could give Sir Peter up to six times his annual salary in shares and share options.

Sir Colin Marshall, BT's deputy chairman and head of the pay committee, urged shareholders to vote in favour of the new scheme at the annual general meeting on 16 July.

The scheme, which would start from next April, has three elements. Executives can invest some of their annual bonuses in Concert shares, the new name

for the merged group, which will be matched with one additional share for every three invested at the end of three years. In addition a share option scheme would provide options worth up to four times an employee's salary. The third scheme, called the "restricted share plan," gives Concert shares worth up to twice the basic salary.

Sir Peter is the only UK executive to share in all three schemes. BT said: "Peter Bonfield is chief executive of the fifth-largest UK company by market capitalisation and the fourth-largest communications company in the world. His pay does not figure in the top 10 of British chief executives. You cannot compare him with the fat cat league."

BT and MCI yesterday announced a \$10bn loan facility for Concert with five US banks.

NFC axes up to 600 jobs in further shake-up

Magnus Grimond

NFC, the transport group which has been restructuring itself for over three years, yesterday announced a new reorganisation and disposal programme to raise £207m and axe up to 600 jobs. The shares, which have fallen from a recent high of 199p in October, added just 0.5p to 128.5p on news of the shake-up, which disappointed some City analysts.

Sir Christopher Bland, chairman, said the latest round of restructuring, which will include a £49m exceptional charge in the full year results, would be the last. Unveiling a 17 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £53.3m for the half year to March, he said NFC had achieved significant earnings growth while disposing of two big businesses where the group did not think it had a future. Sir Christopher said NFC was now out of the woods. "We can now indeed see the wood from the trees."

The group is selling its BRS car leasing operations to GE Capital of the US in a £120m deal, while the Lymx parcel delivery business in the UK is going to management in £34.4m buy out. The remainder of the cash being raised will come from the disposal of the remaining removals businesses of Pickfords in the US and Canada and the rationalisation of some 60 properties in the UK, which are expected to raise £30m. In addition, NFC expects to pick up £32m from relinquishing three "ineconomic" transport contracts with Whitbread, Homebase and Boots.

Gerry Murphy, chief executive, said the exercise would liberate around £200m, of which 20 per cent would be spent on restructuring and the rest on investment in higher than average growth businesses in growing markets. The target would be to achieve rates of return in the mid to high teens.

The reorganisation would see some 500 to 600 redundancies with the majority in the UK. Mr Murphy said, but precise numbers would depend on how successful they were at reallocating staff. One of the casualties is Graham Roberts, currently chief executive of Continental European operations, who has resigned from the board and will leave the group at the year end. His departure follows a decision to integrate the management of the UK and Continental businesses, where losses grew in the year.

The disposals will throw up a net profit of £20m in the second half and, contributing profits of £15.5m last year, will result in some earnings dilution, NFC said. The group announced a 2.5p interim dividend and said it expected to pay a final of 5.75p, which would be the fourth year running the dividend has been held. Sir Christopher said the plan was to rebuild cover, with 1.7 to 2 times more typical at other companies.

IN BRIEF
Minster buys nine nursing homes
Government to sue tobacco firms
Nomura executives charged
Plans dive on profits warning

No
COMMENT

Eddie George worried over windfalls

Tom Stevenson
Financial Editor

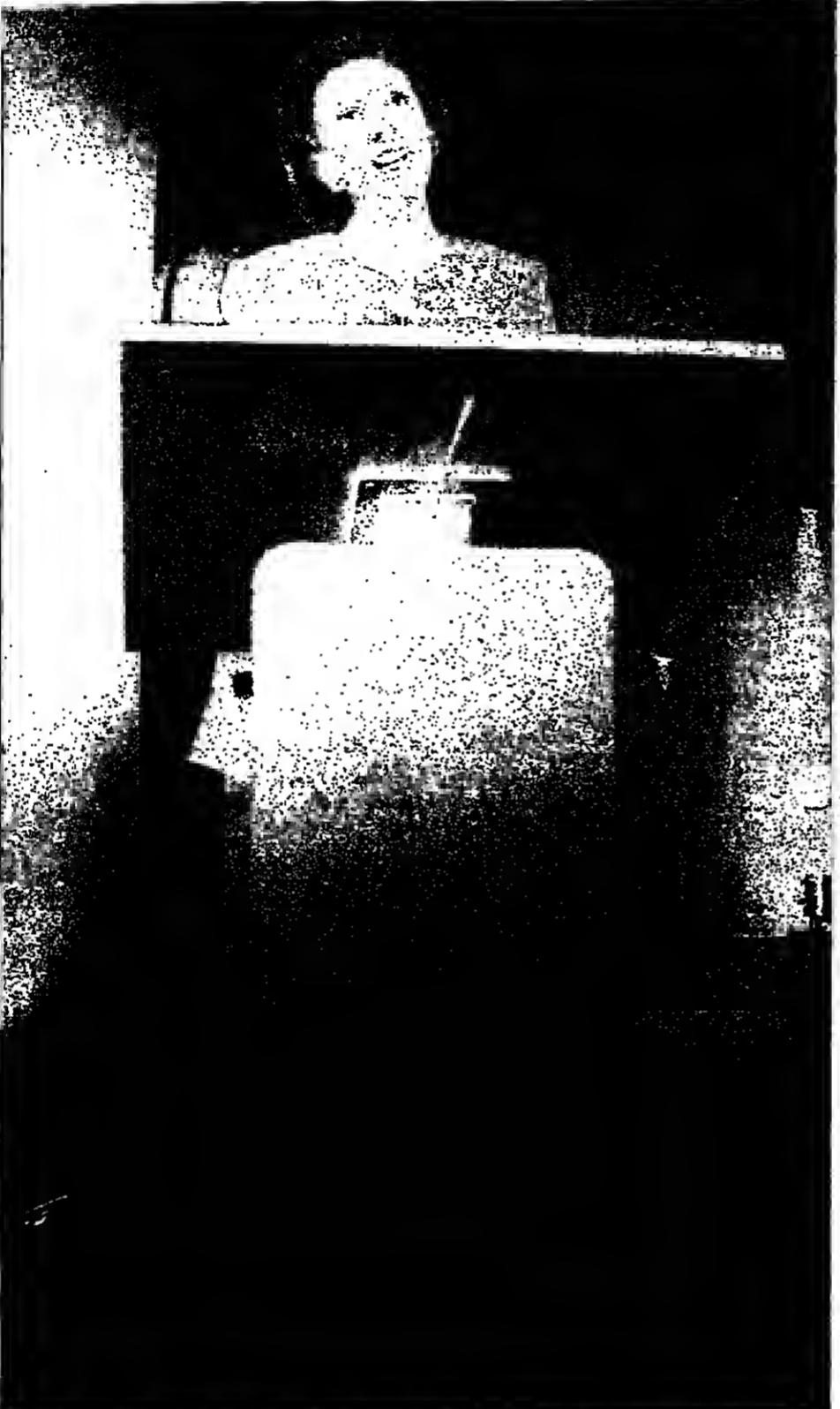
Eddie George said yesterday he was concerned about the potential inflationary pressures from recent building society windfalls. Speaking on the day before the first monthly meeting of the Bank of England's newly appointed monetary policy committee, the Governor warned that the estimated £30bn of handouts from the flotation represented a significant boost to domestic spending.

His caution, coupled with a survey showing an eleventh consecutive rise in trading conditions in the service sector, had analysts predicting a quarter point rise in interest rates would be announced tomorrow. A two-day meeting of the monetary policy committee starts today, its first since Gordon Brown gave the Bank operational independence to set interest rates.

Simon Briscoe, economist at Niko Europe, said: "This survey confirms what we already knew, that the service sector continues to grow strongly. The strength of the survey will increase expectations that the new monetary committee will tighten policy at this week's meeting."

The UK Purchasing Managers Report on Services, published by the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (CIPS), showed companies experiencing higher demand both at home and overseas. Employment in the service sector, which already accounts for three-quarters of all British jobs, grew sharply in May and severe skills shortages started to emerge.

According to CIPS, rising payrolls have not kept pace with outstanding work, with many companies saying they did not have the capacity to meet the growth in demand. Higher



No change: Margaret Beckett said Labour would not merge the Office of Fair Trading and the Monopolies & Mergers Commission
Photograph: Emma Boam

BA plans for alliance hit fresh turbulence in US

David Osborne
Washington

A full year since it was first unveiled, the proposed transatlantic alliance of British Airways and American Airlines met renewed turbulence yesterday after US officials urged that both carriers surrender more landing slots at Heathrow airport than either have so far envisaged.

In the first formal opinion to be delivered by a US government body, the General Accounting Office (GAO)

stopped short of opposing the link. But it said that for fair competition to be preserved, an additional 23 daily slots should be made available at Heathrow to other US airlines.

The opinion was offered as testimony to a critical hearing on the proposed deal at the US Senate in Washington. Among those attending were the chief executives of both BA and American, Robert Ayling and Robert Crandall, as well as the heads of some other airlines that have been vehemently opposed to it.

BA and American have already indicated a willingness to surrender some of the Heathrow landing rights. Until now, however, they have spoken only about 12 slots daily – roughly half what is suggested by the GAO. The GAO indicates that not all the new slots need necessarily come from BA or AA.

Notably absent at yesterday's hearing was Virgin's Richard Branson, who has been especially vigorous in opposing the alliance. Stephen Wolf of US Airways was expected to testify, as was Sir Freddie Laker, who is re-

building his own operation across the Atlantic from a base in Fort Lauderdale.

At a slick presentation before the main hearing, Messrs Crandall and Ayling voiced the frustration at the delay in getting approval for their deal. They placed the blame on their rivals.

"The footdragging is directly attributable to the activities of some competitors who have made a variety of misleading claims about our proposal," Mr Crandall thundered. He was especially abrasiv

ely abrasive about United Airlines, which has just forged

a code-sharing agreement with Lufthansa, Thai Airways and Air Canada, called the Star Alliance, that by most measures will eclipse the BA-AA embrace.

"The United Airlines position in all this has been particularly hypocritical," Mr Crandall said. Mr Ayling meanwhile attacked Mr Branson for stirring controversy on slot overcrowding at Heathrow while he has recently acquired landing rights for new US services from Sabena.

In its opinion, the GAO underlines its concern about the competitive impact of the al-

liance by saying that "to insure increased competition, the other major US airlines that fly international would need to serve Heathrow from their principal hubs".

Under the existing US-UK aviation agreement, only American Airlines and United Airlines are granted the all-preious landing rights at Heathrow. However, approval of the BA-AA deal by the US Department of Transport remains contingent on the successful conclusion of negotiations for a new, more liberal inter-governmental package.

Investment column, page 23

Pearson leads race for US deal

Cathy Newman

to expand in the US. Editions of the *Economist* and the *Financial Times* have already been launched in the US. A substantial acquisition would appear the City, which has been waiting impatiently for news since Ms Scardino took the helm at the beginning of the year.

Institutional Investor publishes a magazine of the same title and newsletters. It also organises business seminars and conferences. Euromoney, the acquisitive magazine publisher and conference organiser, is thought to have pulled out of the auction.

Euromoney, which is controlled by the Daily Mail & General Trust, is understood to have quit the race to buy its US competitor after deciding the asking price was too high.

But the cost of the business, which is owned by Walt Disney, has not deterred other bidders, and it is believed that Pearson may end up splashing out up to \$200m (£125m) for the group. According to sources, most offers from other bidders are expected to be in the region of \$170m.

Around five companies are expected to put in second bids by next Monday. There has been widespread speculation in the US press about Pearson's challengers. Those likely to have shown an interest include the Canadian-owned Thomson Corporation and Reuters.

Pearson's new chief executive, Marjorie Scardino, is herself a Texan and is known to be keen

on the former top US editor, James Fenton, who has been

criticised for his role in the recent US election.

He is reported to be a close friend of the former US president, Bill Clinton, and has been mentioned as a possible candidate for the US presidential election.

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COMMENT

'In its last three years in opposition, Labour consulted every last corner of the business community about what it should do when it got to power. The answer, now that it has finally arrived is, er, yet more consultation'

No firecrackers on mergers policy. That's a relief

After flash Gordon, flat Margaret. No one supposed the President of the Board of Trade would produce the same firecrackers as the Chancellor, but even so her first big policy speech setting out what New Labour means for business was not expected to be quite such a damp squib. In its last three years in opposition, Labour consulted every last corner of the business community about what it should do when it got to power. The answer, now that it has finally arrived is, er, yet more consultation, though this time on a grand scale and dressed up with the buzzwords of modern day business speak. Stand by for the Benchmark for Britain, the Export Forum, the Competitiveness Summit and something called Flexibility Plus.

If this all sounds faintly redolent of the days when Michael "National Champions" Heseltine was running the show in Victoria Street, don't be too surprised. Although Mrs Beckett casually referred to Hezza's two competitiveness white papers as "political stunts", she is gaily preparing her own white paper on the subject, aided by a Competitiveness Audit, an Advisory Group on Competitiveness and a series of Competitiveness Working Parties. Get the point or do we have to Labour it? Competitiveness is going to be right there at the top of the agenda.

Beyond this all-embracing but hopelessly vague pledge, what else is there. Well, for the time being Mrs Beckett seems to be better at deciding what she isn't going to do than what she is going to do. Thus, there will be no

changes in merger policy or the present burden of proof, nor will there be any changes to the bodies that execute competition policy beyond some tinkering at the edges with the OFT and MMC. For that much we can be thankful. It was Mrs Beckett who only six months ago wanted to force hostile bidders to demonstrate that their takeovers were in the public interest as opposed merely to not being against it.

Happily, wiser counsels have prevailed in the form of Gordon Borrie, who has been chairing Labour's committee of wise men examining competition policy.

Mrs Beckett's commitment to flexible labour markets, and her promise that support for the Social Chapter will not extend to importing German and French social security costs, are all to be welcomed. But her single most important announcement was that mergers policy will continue to be guided by competition considerations. Relief all round.

It's too late for second thoughts on Eurofighter

Achting! Spitfire! And in more ways than one. The RAF wants the Eurofighter because it is a kind of modern day Spitfire, and while its original purpose, to shoot down the fighters protecting Russian nuclear bombers, has long since vanished, there is no doubt that this is a wonderful piece of technology that the RAF could justifiably feel proud

of. Our lads are going to get 230 of the blighters, even under Labour, which, British Bulldog-like, is backing this questionable project vigorously as the previous government.

The Germans like it... Well actually they don't like it at all, really. They don't want it, they don't need it, and if it threatens only to make a bad budgetary position look even worse. But in the spirit of European co-operation, they are going to back it nevertheless. At least that's what the German Defence Minister, Volker Ruesthe, told his British counterpart, George Robertson yesterday. Apparently he's been assured that the money will be there by Theo Waigel, the German Finance Minister. So that's alright then. Whether this assurance came before or after the shenanigans about German gold reserves is anyone's guess. It seems to be the Bundesbank that calls the shots in Germany these days, not Mr Waigel, and the Bundesbank appears rather less committed to the cause of European integration than the German government.

Whatever the case, we must for the time being assume that Mr Ruesthe is as good as his word and the Germans are definitely in. If the Eurofighter worsens yet further the state of Germany's public finances in the run-up to monetary union, so be it. All of which must come as a mighty relief to the British Government, for whatever the merits or otherwise of the project, there is no doubt that we in Britain are now in it so deep that even if our New Labour masters (sorry, servants) did want to withdraw, they would find it very hard.

We've already spent £5bn out of the £15bn it will eventually cost us, thousands of hi-tech jobs as well as the future of our aerospace industry rely on it, and while you can argue about the military purpose of this extraordinary piece of machinery, the RAF certainly needs something for its pilots to fly in the next millennium. In other words, as far as we in Britain are concerned, it's too late for second thoughts. If the Germans pull out, it will cost us even more.

So let's hope that Mr Ruesthe is right about July 11, when the German cabinet meets to discuss the budget, and that in the hunt for further spending cuts to replace the now banned gold reserves wheeze, the Eurofighter is not again to be the victim.

Insider dealing should stay a criminal offence

Alastair Darling, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, has long favoured turning insider dealing from a criminal into a civil offence, so reports that he is actually going to do so in the forthcoming Financial Services Bill to create the super-SIB should not come as much of a surprise.

However, it is one thing to say something fashionable while in Opposition, quite another to do it when actually in Government. While any such move would recognise the practicalities and difficulties associated with addressing insider dealing, it would also to many Old

Labour supporters be seen as something of a betrayal, a formal recognition of the principle that there is one law for the poor and an altogether different one for the rich.

On the positive side, making insider dealing a civil offence would ease the burden of proof and allow many more such cases to be brought to the courts. On the negative side, it would rule out the penalty of imprisonment, and the people's right brand offenders of this sort as criminals. Social security cheats would continue to be treated as the thieves they are, financial ones would escape with a fine and a ban. This is not really good enough and it is certainly not what society demands.

In any case, it is not at all clear that transforming the offence into a civil one would make it any easier to deal with the real endemic problem of insider dealing. This is not the hundreds of small to medium sized cases which each year founder on lack of evidence or the law's inability adequately to define the crime, but the big professional City insider dealing rings, operating furiously behind the cover of offshore immunity. Here the problem is not one of prosecution, but of discovery and investigation. Even in civil proceedings it would not be possible to bring a case on circumstantial evidence alone.

Abandoning criminal sanctions in favour of civil ones is not the solution. Rather it is in beefing up powers of investigation, allowing regulators to mount undercover operations, tap phones and the like. Only then will the real villains start to be brought to book.

Power suppliers will have to offer same price for all

Michael Harrison and Chris Godsmark

Power suppliers were facing a further clampdown yesterday after being warned that they would not be allowed to pass the windfall tax on to consumers and would have to offer the same prices to all customers when full competition hits the electricity and gas markets next year.

John Battle, the Energy Minister, made it clear that suppliers would not be allowed to cherry-pick the most lucrative customers by offering special discounts only to those paying by direct debit.

Meanwhile, Professor Stephen Littlechild, the electricity industry regulator, said he would not be prepared to amend price controls to allow the cost of the windfall levy to be met through higher bills. "I don't start with the presumption that I need to do that. The aim of the levy is not to tax customers," he said.

Mr Battle's move follows growing concern at the wide differences in charges in competitive gas trial areas between poorer households on pre-payment meters and those who pay by direct debit. Tariffs from one independent supplier were 34

per cent lower for direct debit payers than for those with pre-payment meters, compared with a 14 per cent spread with British Gas Trading.

Mr Battle said the threat of "fuel poverty" was still a very real issue. "Social obligations must not be allowed to fall between the cracks... If competition doesn't deliver a better deal for those who need it most I do not believe it will have delivered at all."

He said he had already told Professor Littlechild to start a review in the electricity market and would be doing the same with Clare Spottiswoode, the gas regulator.

Mr Battle also told the regional electricity companies they risked a crisis of confidence if they made a mess of introducing competition into the domestic market. "Those targets were set eight years ago. I want them to be met. I want no wrong bills and I want the timetable to be met." He said RECs that were not ready next year would face tough financial penalties, while those that succeeded would receive rewards.

Jim Forbes, chief executive of Southern Electric, insisted it was more important to ensure no customers were hit by computer billing problems. "If it's six

or seven months late it's still a triumph for the UK because it takes us years ahead of the rest of the world." Southern said its computer systems would be ready for testing in January 1998, despite being singled out by the regulator last week for not keeping up with the timetable.

Southern yesterday blamed an 11 per cent drop in profits to £255.5m on price controls from the regulator, and higher interest charges associated with last year's share buyback. The group pledged to spend £100m on seven small gas generating plants.

Meanwhile, Offter's annual report for 1996 shows that although complaints continue to fall nationally they rose by 25 per cent in the case of three RECs—Northern, Norweb and Loudon. In Northern's case, complaints have increased for three years running. Professor Littlechild said he had asked Northern, Swalec and London to demonstrate how they intended to improve performance after a doubling in complaints about quality of supply.

The total number of disconnections meanwhile fell by 43 per cent to 477 with all regions apart again from Northern reporting a decrease.

Share options for 5,000 at British Energy

Chris Godsmark

Around 5,000 employees of British Energy, the privatised nuclear generator, are to receive at least 1,000 share options for the first time next month, worth a minimum of almost £1,500 at yesterday's closing share price.

The group also revealed a £1.5bn deal with British Nuclear Fuels (BNFL) to cover much of its outstanding fuel reprocessing liabilities, which will save British Energy £10m a year. The reprocessing deal covers fuel from five advanced gas cooled reactors at fixed prices, which would pass some of the risk in the contracts over to BNFL. British Energy raised its accrued liabilities for reprocessing and decommissioning by £53m last year to £3.8bn.

The share option scheme came a year after privatisation which has seen British Energy shares surge from their flotation value of 105p on the back of generous dividend payments guaranteed by the government.

All staff will receive 1,000 share options from 15 July at the current share price on that day. If they stay with the company they will be able to exercise the options in three years' time, making a profit if the price then is higher than the price now. Employees with more than five years' service will receive more options up to a maximum of 2000 shares.

Mike Kirwan, finance director, said such a broad scheme was "very unusual". He continued: "It's much more driven by our belief that em-

ployees are properly motivated if they are properly incentivised." Asda, the supermarket group, is one of the few large UK companies that have extended share option schemes to all employees as opposed to other save-as-you-earn schemes.

Bob Hawley, the chief executive, said board executives would also receive share options for the first time, along with other senior managers. He declined to spell out details of their scheme, except to say it would be linked to performance targets, though he said more detailed would be given at British Energy's annual shareholders' meeting on 18 July.

Mr Hawley, who was paid a basic salary of £207,000 in the year to March, said the executive scheme would not be "abnormal". He added: "We are lean cats really. The group said it had no plans for a long-term incentive plan on top.

British Energy yesterday announced its first set of profits for the year to March of £36m after tax, compared with pre-tax losses the previous year of £155m. The shares rose 5p to 148p, though they remain below their peak of 163.5p.

Efficiency savings helped to lift profits, with the Sizewell B reactor running with an 81 per cent load factor, including statutory cut-offs for safety checks. The company increased its share of the energy market from 19 to 21 per cent. The cost-cutting programme continued, with 484 staff leaving to bring the workforce down to 5,940. Investment Column, page 24

IN BRIEF

Westminster buys nine nursing homes

In a further shake-out of the nursing home sector, Westminster Healthcare is buying all the nursing home interests of PPP, the UK's largest provider of long-term private health insurance, for £22.6m cash. The deal to buy PPP's nine homes, plus two under construction, substantially increases Westminster's share of the lucrative private pay market. Seven of the homes, which are based in the South, have self-contained assisted-living buildings attached, adding to Westminster's sheltered home business. Pat Carter, chief executive of Westminster, said: "We were particularly interested in these units. Home care is the growth market in the US."

Former Nomura executives charged

Prosecutors charged Nomura Securities, Japan's largest brokerage, and two former top executives with illegally compensating a gangster for £264,000 in trading losses. The charges were made against against Shimpai Matsuki and Nobutaka Fujikura, two former managing directors. These are the first charges to arise from the scandal, which has widened to include Dai-Ichi Kangyo Bank, the nation's third-largest bank. Ryuichi Koike, 54, a reputed corporate blackmailer, borrowed £14m from the bank, part of which he used to buy 300,000 shares in Nomura and the other three brokerages, according to the Ministry of Finance. Then he used his position as a large shareholder to extort hush money from Nomura, prosecutors allege.

Israeli government to sue tobacco firms

The Israeli government is preparing to file a £3.6bn lawsuit against local and international tobacco companies for losses caused by smoking-related diseases. The decision to file the suit has been taken and it should come to court in Israel in a matter of weeks," said Yair Amikam, a spokesman for the health ministry. "Our experts estimate the damages from smoking at 20bn shekels (£3.6bn), although our legal team is still looking into it and might come up with other figures."

Frost shares dive on profits warning

Shares in Frost dived by 29p to 90p after James Frost, chairman, warned that first-half results from the petrol station group would only be similar to the same period last year. Addressing the annual general meeting, he criticised the price competition between Esso and Tesco. An attempted petrol price rise in January collapsed, due, in my opinion, to a reluctance by Esso and Tesco for one to move up before the other—the country's largest supermarket group is positioning against the country's largest oil company.

RJB Mining plans 'super pit'

RJB Mining has been granted a Coal Authority licence to draw up plans for Britain's biggest coal mining project in 20 years. The planned site could provide 500 mining-related jobs for generations to come, RJB said. The mine could access an estimated 450 million tonnes of quality coal, making it the biggest coal bonanza in Britain since the Selby colliery 20 years ago.

Orange boosts services in mobile phone battle

Cathy Newman

Orange yesterday fired more shots in the intense battle between the four mobile phone networks with a range of enhanced services to reduce costs and improve services to consumer and business users.

The company announced new options for customers aimed at "allowing the many to talk to the many". The services, to be launched over the next few weeks, include moves to indirectly reduce prices by letting more people share bills. Conference call options and a facility to message large numbers of users are also being introduced.

The developments follow comments earlier this week by Vodafone, the largest British mobile operator, that profits would continue to be hit by intense competition in the mobile telephony industry. Only last

week One 2 One, the smallest of the four networks, introduced price packages which it said undercut its competitors.

A spokesman for Orange denied the move was a further bout of the price war, but said: "These services save customers money and make Orange more money."

The first offering, launched yesterday, is Orange Group Answer Phone, which enables voice messages to be sent to 25 different mobile phones at the same time and for the cost of a single call. Group text messaging will follow next month.

Orange Conference Call will allow six people to talk to each other at the same time and Orange Talkshare Plus, an extension of the Talkshare promotion last November, gives up to 50 customers the chance to share a bill, benefiting from an increased number of "bundled"

New tariffs will be published for the Talkshare service nearer launch.

Advisers bail out Tradepoint

Sameena Ahmed

Tradepoint, the cash-strapped electronic share exchange, has saved itself from the administrators by raising interim funds of £775,000 and says it will secure long-term financing before the end of next month. The placing of 1.6 million shares was at a knock-down price of 50p each, 33 per cent below yesterday's 75p closing price.

The AIM-listed group was rescued by its nominated advisers, Williams de Broe, this week after admitting that it had failed to secure long-term financing in time to satisfy its bankers. Williams has waived

the fee for raising the interim cash, but has renegotiated its warrants in the company on substantially improved terms.

Gary Levin, corporate financier at Williams, said the company clearly needed to raise substantially more cash longer term. That amount is likely to be around £9m-£10m.

Mr Levin played down suggestions that the group would be unable to raise the money in time. "There have been expressions of interest, but we are not far down the road. We are hopeful of securing something by the end of July. We are in discussions," he said.

Michael Waller-Bridge, Tradepoint's chief executive said: "No one can ever be 100 per cent sure of anything, but we are fully confident." In a complicated restructuring which accompanied the placing, all five Tradepoint directors have agreed not to be paid for two months. Half of their deferred salary will be used to buy Tradepoint shares at 50p each, equal to 5 per cent of the company. A bonus scheme, based on cash-flow targets, that would have given directors shares equal to 30 per cent of the company, has been scaled back to 5 per cent. Mr Levin said that level was "not appropriate for a company looking for long-term investors".

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Don't be surprised if growth slows significantly next year



**David
Owen**

The risk is that the hit on the real economy from exchange rate appreciation occurs as rate rises are biting and windfalls are fading from view

Sterling export prices are only now beginning to come under pressure. However, because of contracts and recognition lags in 1992 there was an interval before the devaluation led to higher sterling export prices. Looking at the net export performance, one would have forgotten for thinking the 1992 devaluation did little to improve UK growth prospects. In reality, the currency itself proved very helpful, but

the growth effects were delayed until 1994 and 1995. The massive leap in exporters' profitability brought a delayed but powerful supply-side push into export markets.

We find it unrealistic to assume that more than a 20 per cent appreciation in the exchange rate will not hit profits hard. Gross trading profits of all companies recently declined significantly, partly on the back of a pick-up in whole economy unit labour costs.

There also seems to be a degree of "money illusion" built into many analysts' company profit projections. Assuming inflation averages 2.5 per cent a year going forwards, nominal GDP will average at best 5 per cent a year (2.5 per cent trend growth). Over the longer term, earnings will have difficulty beating that benchmark. Even without the rise in the exchange rate, profit downgrades would be in the pipeline.

The risk is that the hit on the real economy from the exchange rate appreciation occurs as rate rises are biting and windfalls are fading from view. We can see from the experience of the US that companies are now much quicker to address a squeeze on margins and a slowdown in order books. Next year would be a different scenario if unemployment started rising again in the UK. Household income growth, a key driver for consumption trends and the housing market, could decelerate sharply.

On a more general point, there seems little risk of a consumer boom without a decisive fall in the saving ratio. This is as high now as in recession. Part of the explanation

for the high saving ratio lies with the labour market. Despite falling unemployment and evidence that average job tenure has picked up a little since recession, survey evidence suggests that job security has declined to record lows.

In the past, falls in unemployment were associated with a declining saving ratio. However, in the past falling unemployment did not coincide with rising job insecurity. If the UK continues following the US model, employee morale is unlikely to continue deteriorating forever. However, by historic standards it could remain very low.

Work we have done at Dresdner Kleinwort Benson has identified the importance of equity withdrawal from the housing market for the consumer boom of the 1980s. Official data confirms there is no evidence yet of equity withdrawal picking up. This is not so surprising. In the past there has always been a long lag before rising house prices led to equity withdrawal. A reduction in negative net equity might lead some individuals to repay debt at a slower rate or to stop repaying debt. However, others may use any improvement in income prospects to reduce their debts.

The Bank of England's task has been made harder by the polarisation that seems in evidence in the labour and housing markets. The top end of the housing market has recovered sharply but the national performance is not so impressive and turnover is relatively very low. Moreover, real wage growth per employee remains relatively low. Overall, the bonuses paid to the finance sector, real wages per employee are growing by not much more than 1 per cent a year, compared to the long-term average of 2 per cent.

It is the task of forecasters to try and identify structural breaks which may have caused relationships which held true in the past to break down. We can identify several. We would not be surprised if economic growth slowed from over 3 per cent this year to under 2 per cent next.

To underline the fact that relatively few investors know they can switch their PEPs without affecting their annual investment limits, Virgin has named 24 "PEP super-

dogs", funds which have consistently failed to match the market sector in which they invest in three consecutive three-year periods.

The list includes two funds from Fidelity, the managers who rose to Virgin's challenge on management charges a couple of years ago. Then Virgin sent Freya Soanes, its favourite "trolley dog", to infiltrate a briefing and make a pleasing visual point. Virgin had thought of dressing up a miserable pook with a ball and chain labelled exit charges, but thought better of it, marketing director Tony Wood said yesterday.

But Fidelity's Paul Kafka thinks Virgin's latest effort is bad and desperate. The two Fidelity funds named have bounced back into the top quartile in the past two years and they levy no exit charges, while Virgin's has been losing hands down in the war to attract windfall investments. "You can't hold your actual windfalls

In our view, the relationship between the exchange rate and the economy has changed. Increasing global competition has led to UK exporters being much more price takers in world markets. Profit margins now do more adjusting to a change in the exchange rate. The chart shows what a close relationship there has been between the exchange rate and sterling export prices. Currency depreciations tend to be associated with rising sterling export prices and higher profit margins. Currency appreciations are associated with falling sterling export prices and lower profit margins.

The author is UK economist and director at Dresdner Kleinwort Benson

Sterling export prices and exchange rate

Year	Exchange rate (inverted)	Yield %
1985	1.00	10.0
1986	1.10	8.0
1987	1.20	6.0
1988	1.30	4.0
1989	1.40	2.0
1990	1.50	1.0
1991	1.60	0.0
1992	1.70	-1.0
1993	1.80	-2.0
1994	1.90	-3.0
1995	2.00	-4.0
1996	2.10	-5.0
1997	2.20	-6.0

Foreign Exchange Rates

Country	Sterling			Dollar		
	Spot	1 month	3 months	Spot	1 month	3 months
US	1.6285	13.11	36.33	1.000		
Canada	2.2402	65.60	181.73	1.3757	30.29	88.84
France	1.4271	250.24	735.708	158.114	350.359	337.23
Germany	2.7655	20.38	40.26	1898.3	15.5-22.5	40.510
Japan	186.13	105.10	161.64	161.14	56.55	67.928
UK	1.6213	12.07	34.75	1.000		
Australia	1.5013	20.32	50.87	1.000		
Netherlands	10.724	280.22	830.750	5.9585	128.107	128.107
Denmark	3.679	68.62	271.258	194.54	42.40	124.9
Ireland	1.3679	12.07	34.75	1.000		
Norway	10.625	230.20	800.450	5.9585	128.107	128.107
Spain	2.3787	21.11	65.51	146.07	0.0-0.0	105.47
Sweden	1.2625	240.10	750.640	7.7526	105.261	105.261
Australia	2.4777	9.3	30.20	1.000		
Hong Kong	12.610	80.39	134.137	7.2433	8.12	22.27
New Zealand	4.0572	0.0	0.0	2.5600	21.24	62.66
Saudi Arabia	3.6765	2.5	9.0	3.7205	1.15	5.10
Singapore	2.3279	0.0	0.0	1.0295	18.15	60.03

Other Spot Rates

Country	Sterling	Dollar	Country	Sterling	Dollar
Argentina	1.6285	0.9569	Nigeria	138.863	852.600
Austria	19.6203	12.712	Oman	1.0274	1.0382
Brazil	1.6285	1.6285	Pakistan	1.6274	1.6284
China	1.6285	1.6285	Peru	1.6285	1.6285
Egypt	5.5373	34.009	Portugal	2.9120	2.9120
Finland	8.4389	5.9184	Qatar	5.9280	36.408
Greece	4.4758	27.7470	Russia	1.6285	1.6285
India	53.2530	33.7720	South Africa	1.6285	1.6285
Kuwait	0.4933	0.3029	Taiwan	4.4758	27.7470

Forward rates quoted high to low are at a discount: subtract from spot rate add to spot rate

*Dollar rates quoted as reciprocals

For the latest foreign exchange rates call 0891 123 3033. Calls cost 50p per minute.

Interest Rates

Country	UK			Germany			US			Japan		
	Base	Discount	1 month	Discount	450%	4 month	Prime	Discount	50%	3 month	Discount	50%
France	6.25%		6.25%				8.75%			5.05%		
Italy	3.95%		3.95%				5.00%			3.00%		
Netherlands	7.5%		7.5%				10-Day Repo 5.25%			100%		
Australia	2.70%		2.70%				ECU Avro 4.0%			4.25%		

Bond Yields

Country	5 yrs	yield %	10 yrs	yield %	Country	5 yrs	yield %	10 yrs	yield %
UK	7.0%	6.9%	7.25%	7.13	Netherlands	6.25%	4.72	6.75%	5.70
US	6.6%	6.48	6.25%	6.63	Spain	7.50%	5.63	6.50	6.50
Japan	5.50%	5.20%	5.90%	5.64	Italy	6.25%	6.71	6.75%	7.20
Australia	10.0%	9.35%	10.5%	10.0%	Belgium	6.0%	5.60	6.00	6.00
Germany	7.50%	7.35%	7.50%	7.50	Denmark	13.0%	4.75	5.50	6.81
France	4.75%	4.55%	5.75%	5.75	Sweden	5.00%	5.00	5.00	5.00
Denmark	10.50%	10.50%	10.50%	10.50	ECU OAT	6.0%	4.75	5.50	6.11

Money Market Rates

Contract	Offer	High/Low	for day	Excess	Open
Long Gil	112.49	113.12	112.38	1.62	112.15
Medium Gil	112.50	113.12	112.38	1.62	112.15
Short Gil	1				

Is Entrepreneur the real deal?

John Gosden is not a pessimist by nature, so it says a great deal about the impression which Entrepreneur has made in his brief, four-race career that the man who will take him on with Benny The Dip in the Derby on Saturday struggles to find anything positive to say about his runner's prospects. There is, he points out finally, "plenty of prize-money for the places."

So there you have it. There will be two processions at Epsom this weekend, the one which takes the Queen to the foot of the new grandstand, and the one which Entrepreneur will lead past the double-deckers. And yet, as any punter knows, favourites – and far hotter ones than Entrepreneur at that – are beaten on our race-tracks on almost a daily basis. Can Michael Stoute's colt really be the certainty that backers' bookies and even the trainers of his rivals appear to think he is?

In a sense, of course, it is a meaningless question, like asking whether a football team has what it takes to win the Premiership shortly before, rather than immediately after, they have played Manchester United. We will only know for sure at 3.50 on Saturday afternoon, by which time, whatever the verdict, millions will have changed hands.

Spend just a few minutes listening to some smart judges, though, and it becomes clear just why it is that many punters will look at the annual five per cent or so interest that they are getting on their savings account on Saturday morning, and de-

Greg Wood finds the professionals unable to fault the Derby favourite

side that an apparently copper-bottomed return of 95 per cent in two and a half minutes is far more attractive.

"At the moment, he's the best there is," says John Reid, who got as close to Entrepreneur as anyone in the 2,000 Guineas, when he finished second on Revouge. "Even as a two-year-old he was the best of Michael Stoute's, and now he's proved himself and won well at a mile. We don't know if he'll

'believe we're going to see a real racehorse. That type that doesn't come along too often'

improve with another four furlongs to run, but there's no reason why he shouldn't. He's got a good temperament, he travels well and relaxes in a race, there's no kinks in him."

Gosden cannot help but agree. "I can only see pluses," he says. "He was a very attractive yearling, well balanced and proportioned, and he has a very good pedigree, by a champion sire out of a mare who's

produced Group winners at a mile and a half. He was always greatly liked as a two-year-old, but wasn't highly tried with this season in mind, and now he's won the Guineas, which is the Derby trial, and won it well. I think he's shown himself on form to be a class above anything else."

The other thing is that he's got a neat action, he's not a big-long-striding horse, and he'll probably be ideal for Epsom. The rest of us are the ones with flaws, I'm afraid. Benny The Dip has them in stamina and pedigree and the second favourite [Silver Patriarch] in terms of speed. We'll turn up and have a go, but I think as much as you can be sure of anything in this business, it looks fairly set."

Even those most dispassionate of judges, the handicappers at *Timeform*, struggle to predict anything but a win for the favourite. "He's got the form to win it," Chris Williams, who assesses the Classic generation, says, "and we know he's going to prove at least as effective over a mile and a half. He's currently rated 126p, and you'd have to go back to Nashwan (1989) to find a horse with a better rating going into the race."

The average Derby winner these days is rated about 127 or 128, but if he's going to be outstanding, we'd like to see him run to a much higher mark than that. It all depends on the quality of the opposition, how high he can be pushed."

While the numbers in the *Timeform* black book are persuasive, however, there is a

second set of statistics which scholars caution. Most bookmakers expect Entrepreneur to set off as the sixth odds-on Derby favourite since the War, but backers were paid out over just three. Two of the three losers, Tudor Minstrel (4-7 favourite in 1947) and El Gran Señor (8-11 in 1948) arrived at Epsom, like Entrepreneur, fresh from success in the 2,000 Guineas, while in all nine winners of the Newmarket Classic have been beaten at odds-on for the Derby.

As Gosden says, "Before the

Guineas, a lot of people said the horse had too much stamina to win, and of course afterwards they said he had too much speed for the Derby. You can't make people like that happy."

"I'm inclined to believe that we're going to see a real racehorse win well. The type that doesn't come along too often."

favour that unlike many top milers whose stamina will always be suspect over an extra four furlongs, pedigree experts believe him to have that hallmark of brilliance, impeccable middle-distance bloodlines but with the speed to beat the best at a mile.

As Gosden says, "Before the Guineas, a lot of people said the horse had too much stamina to win, and of course afterwards they said he had too much speed for the Derby. You can't make people like that happy."

"I'm inclined to believe that we're going to see a real racehorse win well. The type that doesn't come along too often."

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3.30 SONG MIST (map) 4.00 Mothlyeb 4.30 Chabrol 5.00 Utmost Zeal

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STYLIS: Straight course – for side; Lufit – stands side; remainder – in-side.

LEH: Hand-course level fair.

Course: N of town on A49, Yarmouth station. In. ADMISSION: £10 (Ages 11-17). Tickets £8.00 (01971 57.150). Fav. & course entriees £5.00 (01971 53.350). CAR PARK: Ch. 1. DISTANCE: FIRST TIME: Misterton, Pudding Harry (12-30); 2nd: 1st. 3rd: 2nd. 4th: 3rd. 5th: 4th. 6th: 5th. 7th: 6th. 8th: 7th. 9th: 8th. 10th: 9th. 11th: 10th. 12th: 11th. 13th: 12th. 14th: 13th. 15th: 14th. 16th: 15th. 17th: 16th. 18th: 17th. 19th: 18th. 20th: 19th. 21st: 20th. 22nd: 21st. 23rd: 22nd. 24th: 23rd. 25th: 24th. 26th: 25th. 27th: 26th. 28th: 27th. 29th: 28th. 30th: 29th. 31st: 30th. 32nd: 31st. 33rd: 32nd. 34th: 33rd. 35th: 34th. 36th: 35th. 37th: 36th. 38th: 37th. 39th: 38th. 40th: 39th. 41st: 40th. 42nd: 41st. 43rd: 42nd. 44th: 43rd. 45th: 44th. 46th: 45th. 47th: 46th. 48th: 47th. 49th: 48th. 50th: 49th. 51st: 50th. 52nd: 51st. 53rd: 52nd. 54th: 53rd. 55th: 54th. 56th: 55th. 57th: 56th. 58th: 57th. 59th: 58th. 60th: 59th. 61st: 60th. 62nd: 61st. 63rd: 62nd. 64th: 63rd. 65th: 64th. 66th: 65th. 67th: 66th. 68th: 67th. 69th: 68th. 70th: 69th. 71st: 70th. 72nd: 71st. 73rd: 72nd. 74th: 73rd. 75th: 74th. 76th: 75th. 77th: 76th. 78th: 77th. 79th: 78th. 80th: 79th. 81st: 80th. 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THE ASHES 97: A stylist from Lancashire refuses to entertain any negative thoughts as he takes on Australia at Edgbaston

Crawley chases new highs for England

When John Crawley scored 286 for England against Eastern Province at Port Elizabeth in 1994, the highest score by an England player on any tour for more than 30 years, it seemed only a matter of time before the full England team would be benefiting from his runs. It has been a matter of time, and patience, and hard work, and even dieting, but the 25-year-old Lancashire batsman now appears to be the genuine article.

With two Test centuries under his belt, and a style and elegance that will be matched only by Mark Waugh in this Ashes series, Crawley is as confident a character as you are likely to meet. Only the packet of Silk Cut that he dashes off to find after a long, hot day in the field at Leicester could perhaps be perceived as a sign of tension in his armoury as he looks forward to today's match.

"I've never played at Edgbaston in a Test," he says. "I've tested against Warne quite a bit. He's a phenomenal bowler really, without doubt the best leg-spinner in the world, which is saying something. McGrath I haven't really faced that much but he's got a great record so he's bound to be a danger. They're a strong side, probably the best in the world."

For England player, Crawley's CV is about as complete as it could be. Like the captain, Mike Atherton, he went from Manchester Grammar to captain Cambridge University. Then it was England Under-19, England A and finally his Test debut against South Africa at Lord's in 1994. He was in and out of the side over the next two years, but after reaching three figures for the first time, against Pakistan at The Oval last sum-

Adam Sreter meets a batsmen with a classic pedigree confident of helping his country succeed in today's crucial Test series opener

mer, he was a regular and increasingly reassuring presence at No 6 during the winter.

At the moment cricketing brothers are all the rage, and Crawley himself is the youngest of three. Mark, the eldest, captained Oxford when Atherton captained Cambridge. He went on to play for Lancashire and Nottinghamshire, while Peter, the middle brother, played under John's captaincy at Cam-

bridge.

Mark Crawley is now a foreign securities trader in the City — I don't really deserve too much into that; it's all too complicated for me," says John — and although he never played for England himself, big brother has nevertheless made a significant contribution to his country's cause. "He gave me a role model to follow," John said.

"He was always four or five years ahead of me so I could set my targets and aims four or five years into the future. I followed his career closely and then tried to match it or do better whenever I could. I don't think we played any first-class matches together, but I might be mistaken," he added.

Looking back to his days at Cambridge, where he read history at Trinity College, Crawley said: "Cambridge is a good

place to start playing. A lot of people frown upon it and say it's a weak standard of cricket, the counties don't try. But the mere fact that you're playing a county XI means it's a pretty decent standard attack you're facing most of the time. The only problem was that the pitch there was very slow, very low, so every year in early July I had to come back to Lancashire and adjust to the quicker pitches, which I prefer to bat on anyway."

After captaining the England Under-19 side in a drawn series against an Australian team that included Greg Blewett, Michael Kasprowicz and Adam Gilchrist of the present tour party, it was off

to South Africa with England A and the famous Innings in Port Elizabeth. Crawley, however, is anxious to play down the significance of that day and admits to having the pressure.

"That was the only time really, because there was so much written after that A tour," he said. "The standard of the teams we played in South Africa was actually very poor. I think only Orange Free State and Northern Transvaal had what they would call a full XI, and although you've got to get runs, the runs I got on that tour were probably overvalued a little bit.

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Wainwright lets the Lions loose

Rugby Union

CHRIS HEWETT
reports from Witbank
Mpumalanga
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Ian Cotton's unbeaten Lions arrived on the high veld fully expecting the red mist to descend over the Johans van Riebeek Stadium. As it turned out, Mpumalanga generated nothing more frightening than the smoke of a thousand barbecues and in the space of 20 extraordinary minutes, the up-country hard-nuts of the South-Eastern Transvaal found themselves blown away by some very special rugby indeed.

Anyone tempted to write off Rob Wainwright, the Lions' blind-side flanker, following his travails in the swamplands of East London a week ago was forced to think again as Scotland's national captain ran in a startling hat-trick of tries before the end of the opening quarter.

The wings, Ieuan Evans and Tony Underwood, then found their stride with two tries apiece and with Matt Dawson, Neil Jenkins and Nick Beal also picking routes through a bemused and befuddled home defence, there was little for Mpumalanga to do but snarl

about in search of the odd smidgen of mayhem.

Sadly, they achieved something in that direction. Elandre van der Berg, the culprit in Port Elizabeth in 1994, reconfirmed his position of high office in the Head-kickers' Convention by "river dancing" all over Wainwright at a 24-minute ruck. His second-row partner, Marius Bosman, also made a mark of sorts by stamping on Doddie Weir's left knee – an act that may have been the Scots' tour parties. This time, it was a different story.

Tom Smith, the new David Sole from north of the border, may well have played himself into the Test team with a solid scrummaging performance allied to some dynamic support work in open field. His fellow prop, Paul Wallace, also made inroads with the selectors with a rich display of skilled ball-handling far beyond the scope of most British tight forwards.

"The continuity from the loose forwards has been evident all tour," said Tim Rodber, the captain. "What we were able to draw on this time was a very strong contribution from the tight forwards."

Wainwright's remarkable burst of scoring effectively killed the game before anyone had broken sweat. Intelligent co-operation between Neil Back and Allan Bateman, plus an elusive run from Evans, opened the door for the first try in the 11th minute, while the second had more to do with muscle as the lean Watsonian wrestled his way over from close-range on 15. Two minutes later, Wain-

wright employed his natural pace to capitalise on Keith Wood's pop-pass and gallop in from 20 metres.

Further scores arrived at regular intervals, Dawson and Underwood crossing before the break. Underwood took advantage of Evans' clever angle to rub it in within a minute of

the restart, by which time Mpumalanga were dead in the water. Next up are the Blue Bulls of Northern Transvaal. They will not have enjoyed what they saw yesterday.

ENGLAND (Lancashire and Wales), A Shropshire (Cheshire, Cheshire and Flintshire, Shropshire and Wales), W Greenwood (Lancashire), T Underwood (Merseyside and England), N Jenkins (Wales), P Wallace (Wales), M Jones (Wales), R Morgan (Wales), R Jones (Wales), R Morgan (Wales and Scotland), K Wood (Hampshire and Isle of Wight, West Sussex, West Midlands and Scotland), J Rodber (Norfolk and Scotland), E Evans (Gwent), R Vasey, R Pogger, G Bowler, P Nel (van Rooyen, 77), R



Photograph: Allsport

wright's third try during the Lions' impressive win yesterday

van As, D van Zyl; H Swan, H Kemp, A Botha, F Rossouw, T Botha, Hassen (both from Beaufort, 73), P Joubert, L Lewis (both from Northland and England), A Steyn (both from Northland and Wales), W Greenwood (Lancashire), T Underwood (Merseyside and England), N Jenkins (Wales), P Wallace (Wales), M Jones (Wales), R Morgan (Wales and Scotland), K Wood (Hampshire and Isle of Wight, West Sussex, West Midlands and Scotland), J Rodber (Norfolk and Scotland), E Evans (Gwent), R Vasey, R Pogger, G Bowler, P Nel (van Rooyen, 77), R

England. Replacements: M Regan (Bristol and England) for Wood; S Sharpe (Bristol and England) for Evans; P Young (Bristol and Wales) for Wallace; T Williams (Bristol and Wales) for Jenkins.

■ England are confident that Adedayo Adegbayo will play in the second Test in Argentina on Saturday, despite the ankle injury the wing picked up in Tuesday's 37-8 victory over Cuyo.

Rugby League

DAVE HADFIELD

St Helens and their captain, Bobbie Goulding, will be stimulated by revenge when they kick-off the World Club Championship against Auckland Warriors tomorrow night.

"Six St Helens players have come off a tour to New Zealand, where we got our bottoms kicked 3-1," said Goulding at the launch of the tournament yesterday. "We are still smarting from what a lot of these Auckland players did to us."

The Auckland coach, Frank Endacott, will have two of those players, Matthew Ridge and Steve Kearney, back after being rested at the weekend.

Perth Reds, who start their campaign at Castleford on Sunday, have sprung a surprise by leaving their resident Englishman, Barrie-Jon Mather, back in Western Australia.

Mather, who played for Great Britain on last year's Kiwi tour, played for Reds' reserves at the weekend and failed to win a place in the squad to travel to Europe.

"I would have liked to have him here, because he would have been very good from a promotional point of view," the Reds' coach, Dean Lance, said. "But unfortunately his form hasn't been up to scratch since he had a groin operation. It comes down to whether you want a good profile or to win football matches."

Perth will play a Castleford side without the veteran, Graham Steadman, but with Jason Liddon returning after injury.

Also on Sunday, Cronulla, one of the favourites to go to troubled Warrington, with their most experienced player, Andrew Ettingshausen, warning them not to take British opposition too lightly.

"The competitiveness of British sides has changed remarkably since I was at Leeds in 1985," he said. "I don't think there's going to be a lot to any of the games. I think they are all going to be pretty close."

While other British clubs are preparing for matches against international opposition, most of Sheffield's Super League squad will face a less exotic challenge – from Workington Town reserves.

Their coach, John Kear, is召集ing eight members of the first team beaten 32-12 at London last Friday by including them in the Alliance team to play in Cumbria tomorrow night. Sheffield do not start their World Club Championship programme until next week.

Sheringham's snub to £4m

Football

Gerry Francis, the Tottenham Hotspur manager, yesterday said he was disappointed that Teddy Sheringham had decided to leave after rejecting a four-year contract that would have earned the striker £1m a year.

As details emerged from Spurs of the talks that ended with the England forward, who still has two seasons of his contract to run, asking for a transfer, Francis said: "It is very disappointing that negotiations have broken down. The club have tried very hard to agree something with Teddy."

"We didn't have to offer him anything, but obviously a four-year deal was not enough."

According to Tottenham, the 31-year-old Sheringham, who could now end up partnering his England co-striker, Alan Shearer, at Newcastle United, wanted a five-year deal which would have qualified him for a 10-year testimonial.

The Spurs chairman, Alan Sugar, was reluctant to commit the club to paying a 36-year-old player a £1m salary, so Sheringham asked for time to consider. When Sugar had received no reply after 48 hours, he scrapped the offer and replaced it with a three-year deal.

Sheringham, who had "done what I had to do" after Sugar's action, also cited Spurs lack of success as a factor in his decision to move on.

"Arsène Wenger returned to Monaco yesterday to take two of his former players to Highbury. Arsenal are understood to have paid £5m for the left-flank man Emmanuel Petit and the central defender Gilles Grimandi, who are both 26."

Sprint showdown a 'circus'

Athletics

The head of track and field's world governing body has criticised the 150-metre match between Donovan Bailey and Michael Johnson as a "circus" and said a rematch would not be sanctioned.

Primo Nebiolo, the president of the International Amateur Athletic Federation, said last Sunday's showdown at Toronto's Skydome went outside the IAAF's rules by having just two runners, instead of at least four.

"Some people have already talked about a rematch in Las Vegas," Nebiolo was reported as saying yesterday. "You can forget about that under these conditions. Our federation will not give authorisation and, without that, you can't do anything. This is not sports as entertainment, but more like something out of a circus. And we're not interested in it."

Bailey, the Olympic 100-metre champion, won Sunday's race as Johnson, the 200 and 400 champion, pulled up halfway with a quadriplegia injury.

The Canadian approach to the event has been heavily criticised by Michael Johnson's coach. He has described the coach and staff who handle Bailey as "about as low as you can get" if they had ordered the world 100 metres record holder to go out fast and try to force Johnson to hurt himself.

"His [Bailey's] coach was quoted in a Toronto paper in detail as saying that's what their game plan was," Clyde Hart, the head coach at Baylor University, said at the US collegiate championships in Bloomington, Indiana. "If that's the case, that's about as low as you can get."

Rafter breaks new ground

Tennis

JON ROBERTS
reports from Roland Garros

Pat Rafter, in common with Rod Laver, learned to play tennis on crushed antbeds in Queensland. Chance proving to be a fine thing at this year's French Open, Rafter trusts that his run of form on the clay courts of Paris will enable him to become the first Australian men's singles finalist since Laver defeated his compatriot Ken Rosewall in 1969.

Laver's triumph – the second leg of his second Grand Slam brought five consecutive years of Australian domination to a close. Overall, Australians have won the men's singles 11 times, one more than the United States, France and Sweden.

Rafter's path to emulating the feats of his predecessors is blocked by Spain's Sergi Bruguera – the only remaining seed (No 16) and the winner of the title in 1993 and 1994 – and one of tomorrow's other semi-finalists, Filip Dewulf, a Belgian as saying yesterday. "You can forget about that under these conditions. Our federation will not give authorisation and, without that, you can't do anything. This is not sports as entertainment, but more like something out of a circus. And we're not interested in it."

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Rafter has not yet ridden on a senior team. Now aged 28, she must have an excellent chance of fulfilling that ambition with either Bits and Pieces (fourth at Burghley and ninth at Badminton) or Designer Tramp (runner-up at Punchestown) in Ireland this year.

King, who was part of the British team that won the European title two years ago, is listed with Star Appeal (the winner at Burghley last year and runner-up at Badminton in May) and King Solomon III (the winner at Blenheim last year and at Saumur in France in April).

Funnell has not yet ridden on a senior team. Now aged 28, she must have an excellent chance of fulfilling that ambition with either Bits and Pieces (fourth at Burghley and ninth at Badminton) or Designer Tramp (runner-up at Punchestown) in Ireland this year.

As host nation, Britain will be able to send 12 riders to Burghley, a squad of six, from which the team of four will be chosen, plus an extra six to compete as individuals.

SPORTING DIGEST

compete in tournaments, short-circuited the hopes of two members of the Walker Cup squad, Shaun Webster and Graham Rankin. Refusing to give up at three down with four to play, Phillips fought back to beat Webster, the reigning English champion, at the 19th hole.

Rankin, winner of the Lytham Trophy last month, was described by Brooks as the "best player in Britain the way he has been playing". On his day, Graham will beat me eight times out of 10, but he had a slightly off day," Phillips said.

The 33-year-old Geordie, who needs to take a holiday to

qualifier, and Gustavo Kuerten, the colourful Brazilian.

While Rafter's serve-volley game baffled Gale Blanco, of Barcelona, in the quarter-finals yesterday, 4-6, 6-3, 6-2, 6-3, the 24-year-old Australian is well aware that his record against Bruguera is not exactly a confidence-booster.

The Spaniard, who overcame Hicham Arazi of Morocco yesterday, 4-6, 6-3, 6-2, 6-2, but lost the last of his six previous matches against Rafter – and that one was played on concrete in Cincinnati last August.

Rafter has not even salvaged a set in their four matches on clay, two of which were on the French Open (1994 and 1995). Bruguera also won their one encounter on grass, 13-11 in the fifth set of an epic in the fourth round at Wimbledon in 1994.

"I'm going to keep serve-volleying against him," Rafter says, "but I think I'm doing it a little better now than I was in '94 and '95. He's going to have to hit a few more balls past me."

The Australian appears to be

more at ease with his game nowadays, summarising his approach to the European clay court season by saying: "The best advice I gave myself was that I was coming here for three weeks. Off. Clay court? Another break, another holiday for me."

He was only half joking. After reaching the final in St Pölten, Austria, the weekend before the French Open, he realised he might be busier here in Paris than usual. Had nobody ever told him that you cannot win this tournament by serving and volleying?" "No," they said. "If the sun shines, you've got a good chance."

Perhaps, but he is still convincing himself. "Never have I even thought of reaching this far in the French Open. I'm sort of more amazed than anything. Things are going great. The next match is another tough one. Again, it's winnable. He can also beat me, so I'm aware of that. It's an opportunity for me to make the finals."

What he has achieved already will lift his ranking from No 25 to probably a seeding for Wimbledon.

bledop, none of which he could have imagined at the beginning of the year, when rehabilitating from a wrist injury.

His fortunes changed for the better after he staged a remarkable comeback from two sets to love down to win the first set, go down a break in the second. It's not a panic stage for me. I know I've been able to do it, and I feel confident of doing it again. I think that was one of the really important things I got out of that match."

Whatever happens in the First Test at Edgbaston today, Australia's second test will be on a tricky spin in Paris tomorrow.

■ Tim Henman, the British No 1, yesterday signed the biggest sponsorship contract ever awarded to a British player in a five-year deal to use Slazenger racquets.

Philipson pulls the plug on favourites

Golf

ANDY FARRELL
reports from Royal St George's

Like the French Open tennis, the opening rounds of the Amateur Championship had their fair share of shocks. At least some of those here were caused by a fully qualified electrician. Shaun Phillips last night checked back into his hotel in Deal and today will play Michael Brooks, the son of the club professional here, in the third round.

Rankin, winner of the Lytham Trophy last month, was described by Brooks as the "best player in Britain the way he has been playing". On his day, Graham will beat me eight times out of 10, but he had a slightly off day," Phillips said.

It was a murky day, with hard

clouds, but he pulled his drive into the rough, but his "swipe with a nine-iron" was effective enough to find the green and keep the match alive. At the 19th, Philipson remarkably holed from 35 feet, forcing Rankin to follow him in from the last from the fairway.

Philipson had pulled his drive into the rough, but his "swipe with a nine-iron" was effective enough to find the green and keep the match alive. At the 19th, Philipson remarkably holed from 35 feet, forcing Rankin to follow him in from the last from the fairway.

Despite not being a member of the club, Brooks took the largest following on an interesting journey, having been two down with five to play before

feet, but the Scot had no answer when Philipson spun his five-iron back to within a foot of the hole at the 20th.

John Paragan, like Rankin a member of the 1995 winning Walker Cup team, continued a defeat when he bogeyed the last five holes to go from three up with three to play to lose at the 20th to an American, Steve Sheehan, the brother of Solheim Cup player Patty.

Despite not being a member of the club, Brooks took the largest following on an interesting journey, having been two down with five to play before

beating Stuart Martin in the last. Justin Rose and Jose Manuel Lara meet this morning in a repeat of their encounter in the recent England-Spain international when Rose, who is 17 next month, was five under par and birdied three of the last four holes to win by one hole.

Greg Norman has turned down a lucrative offer to face Tiger Woods in a head-to-head challenge for television. Norman said he declined the chance of a best-of-three challenge against the US Masters champion because the timing of the event was not suitable.

FRENCH OPEN TENNIS RESULTS

Second players in capitals

Men's singles, quarter-finals: P Rafter (Aus) bt G Blanco (Sp) 6-3 6-6 6-3 BRUGUERA (Sp) bt H Arnaud (Mor)

